



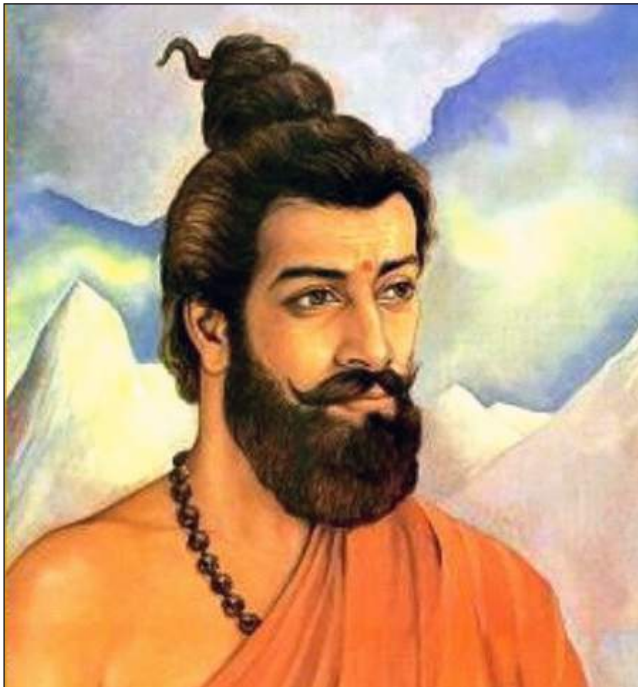
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The Transcendental Nature of Kardama Muni

Features



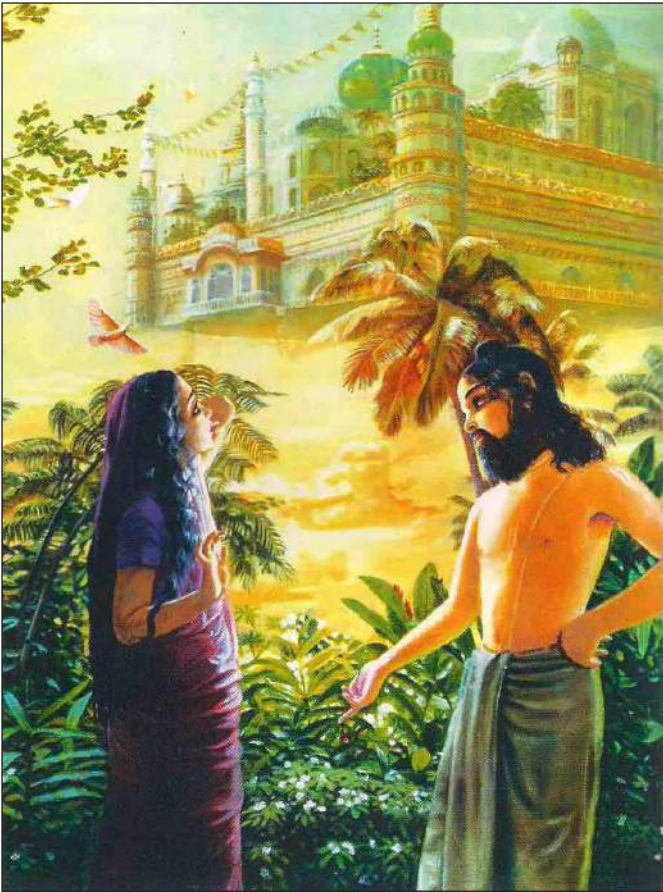
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KARDAMA REWARDS DEVAHUTI'S SERVICE

Sri Maitreya R̥ṣi

The daughter of Manu, who was fully devoted to her husband, looked upon him as greater even than providence. Thus she expected great blessings from him. Having served him for a long time, she grew weak and emaciated due to her religious observances. Seeing her condition, Kardama, the foremost of celestial sages, was overcome with compassion and spoke to her in a voice choked with great love.

Kardama Muni said: O respectful daughter of Svayambhuva Manu, today I am very much pleased with you for your great devotion and most excellent loving service. Since the body is so dear to embodied beings, I am astonished that you have neglected your own body to use it on my behalf. I have achieved the blessings of the Lord in discharging my own religious life of austerity, meditation and Krishna consciousness. Although you have not yet experienced these achievements, which are free from fear and lamentation, I shall offer them all to you because you are engaged in my service. Now just look at them. I am giving you the transcendental vision to see how nice they are. What is the use of enjoyments other than the Lord's grace? All material achievements are subject to be annihilated simply by a movement of the eyebrows

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By your principles of devotion to your husband, you have achieved and can enjoy transcendental gifts very rarely obtained by persons proud of aristocracy and material possessions.

Upon hearing the speaking of her husband, who excelled in knowledge of all kinds of transcendental science, innocent Devahuti was very satisfied. Her smiling face shining with a slightly bashful glance, she spoke in a choked voice because of great humility and love.

Sri Devahuti said: My dear husband, O best of *brāhmaṇas*, I know that you have achieved perfection and are the master of all the infallible mystic powers because you are under the protection of yogamaya, the transcendental nature. But you once made a promise that our bodily union should now fulfill, since children are a great quality for a chaste woman who has a glorious husband. My dear lord, I am struck by excited emotion for you. Therefore kindly make what arrangements must be made according to the scriptures so that my skinny body, emaciated through unsatisfied passion, may be rendered fit for you. Also, my lord, please think of a suitable house for this purpose.

Kardama muni produces aerial mansion

Seeking to please his beloved wife, the sage Kardama exercised his yogic power and instantly produced an aerial mansion that could travel at his will. It was a wonderful structure, bedecked with all sorts of jewels, adorned with pillars of precious stones, and capable of yielding whatever one desired. It was equipped with every form of furniture and wealth, which tended to increase in the course of time. The castle was fully equipped with all necessary paraphernalia, and it was pleasing in all seasons. It was decorated all around with flags, festoons and artistic work of variegated colors. It was further embellished with wreaths of charming flowers that attracted sweetly humming bees and with tapestries of linen, silk and various other fabrics.

The palace looked charming, with beds, couches, fans and seats, all separately arranged in seven stories. Its beauty was enhanced by artistic engravings here and there on the walls. The floor was of emerald, with coral daises. The palace was very beautiful, with its coral thresholds at the entrances and its doors bedecked with diamonds. Gold pinnacles crowned its domes of sapphire.

With the choicest rubies set in its diamond walls, it appeared as though possessed of eyes. It was furnished with wonderful canopies and greatly valuable gates of gold. Here and there in that palace were multitudes of live swans and pigeons, as well as artificial swans and pigeons so lifelike that the real

swans rose above them again and again, thinking them live birds like themselves. Thus the palace vibrated with the sounds of these birds.

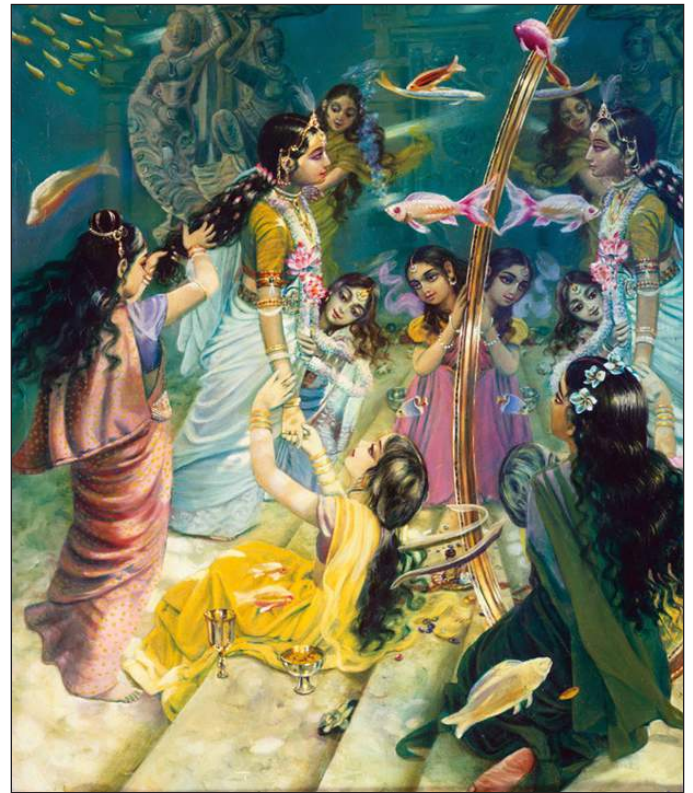
The castle had pleasure grounds, resting chambers, bedrooms and inner and outer yards designed with an eye to comfort. All this caused astonishment to the sage himself. When he saw Devahuti looking at the gigantic, opulent palace with a displeased heart, Kardama Muni could understand her feelings because he could study the heart of anyone. Thus he personally addressed his wife as follows.

Devahuti regains her Beauty

My dear Devahuti, you look very much afraid. First bathe in Lake Bindu-sarovara, created by Lord Vishnu Himself, which can grant all the desires of a human being, and then mount this airplane.

The lotus-eyed Devahuti accepted the order of her husband. Because of her dirty dress and the locks of matted hair on her head, she did not look very attractive. Her body was coated with a thick layer of dirt, and her breasts were discolored. She dove, however, into the lake, which contained the sacred waters of the Sarasvati. In a house inside the lake she saw one thousand girls, all in the prime of youth and fragrant like lotuses. Seeing her, the damsels suddenly rose and said with folded hands, "We are your maidservants. Tell us what we can do for you." The girls, being very respectful to Devahuti, brought her forth, and after bathing her with valuable oils and ointments, they gave her fine, new, spotless cloth to cover her body. They then decorated her with very excellent and valuable jewels, which shone brightly. Next they offered her food containing all good qualities, and a sweet, inebriating drink called *āsavam*. Then in a mirror she beheld her own reflection. Her body was completely freed from all dirt, and she was adorned with a garland. Dressed in unsullied robes and decorated with auspicious marks of tilaka, she was served very respectfully by the maids. Her entire body, including her head, was completely bathed, and she was decorated all over with ornaments. She wore a special necklace with a locket. There were bangles on her wrists and tinkling anklets of gold about her ankles. About her hips she wore a girdle of gold, set with numerous jewels, and she was further adorned with a precious pearl necklace and auspicious substances. Her countenance shone, with beautiful teeth and charming eyebrows. Her eyes, distinguished by lovely moist corners, defeated the beauty of lotus buds. Her face was surrounded by dark curling tresses.

When she thought of her great husband, the best of the sages, Kardama Muni, who was very dear to her, she, along with all the maidservants, at once appeared where he was. She was amazed to find herself



surrounded by a thousand maids in the presence of her husband and to witness his yogic power. The sage could see that Devahuti had washed herself clean and was shining forth as though no longer his former wife. She had regained her own original beauty as the daughter of a prince. Dressed in excellent robes, her charming breasts duly girded, she was waited upon by a thousand Gandharva girls.

Aerial mansion travels through various planets

O destroyer of the enemy, his fondness for her grew, and he placed her on the aerial mansion. Though seemingly attached to his beloved consort while served by the Gandharva girls, the sage did not lose his glory, which was mastery over his self. In the aerial mansion Kardama Muni with his consort shone as charmingly as the moon in the midst of the stars in the sky, which causes rows of lilies to open in ponds at night. In that aerial mansion he traveled to the pleasure valleys of Mount Meru, which were rendered all the more beautiful by cool, gentle, fragrant breezes that stimulated passion. In these valleys, the treasurer of the gods, Kuvera, surrounded by beautiful women and praised by the Siddhas, generally enjoys pleasure. Kardama Muni also, surrounded by the beautiful damsels and his wife, went there and enjoyed for many, many years.

Satisfied by his wife, he enjoyed in that aerial mansion not only on Mount Meru but in different gardens known as Vaishrambhaka, Surasana, Nandana, Puspabhadra and Caitrarathya, and by the Manasa-sarovara Lake. He traveled in that way through the

various planets, as the air passes uncontrolled in every direction. Coursing through the air in that great and splendid aerial mansion, which could fly at his will, he surpassed even the demigods. After showing his wife the globe of the universe and its different arrangements, full of many wonders, the great yogi Kardama Muni returned to his own hermitage.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 23. Devahuti's Lamentation » Verses:4-43* ❧

THE TRANSCENDENTAL NATURE OF KARDAMA MUNI

His Divine Grace
A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Kuvera is one of the eight demigods who are in charge of different directions of the universe. It is said that Indra is in charge of the eastern side of the universe, where the heavenly planet, or paradise, is situated. Similarly, Agni is in charge of the southeastern portion of the universe; Yama, the demigod who punishes sinners, is in charge of the southern portion; Nirrti is in charge of the southwestern part of the universe; Varuna, the demigod in charge of the waters, is in charge of the western portion; Vayu, who controls the air and who has wings to travel in the air, is in charge of the northwestern part of the universe; and Kuvera, the treasurer of the demigods, is in charge of the northern part of the universe. All these demigods take pleasure in the valleys of Mount Meru, which is situated somewhere between the sun and the earth. In the aerial mansion, Kardama Muni traveled throughout the eight directions controlled by the different demigods described above, and as the demigods go to Mount Meru, he also went there to enjoy life.

The planets occupied by the demigods are restricted to their own orbits, but Kardama Muni, by his yogic power, could travel all over the different directions of the universe without restriction. The living entities who are within the universe are called conditioned souls; that is, they are not free to move everywhere. We are inhabitants of this earthly globe; we cannot move freely to other planets. In the modern age, man is trying to go to other planets, but so far he has been unsuccessful. It is not possible to travel to any other planets because by the laws of nature even the demigods cannot move from one planet to another. But Kardama Muni, by his yogic power, could surpass the strength of the demigods and travel in space in all directions. The comparison here is very suitable. As the air is free to move anywhere without restriction, so Kardama Muni unrestrictedly traveled in all directions of the universe.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

known as *tīrtha-pāda*. The Ganges is called a sacred river because it emanates from the toe of Vishnu. The Ganges is meant to eradicate all the material distresses of the conditioned souls. For any living entity, therefore, who has taken shelter of the holy lotus feet of the Lord, nothing is impossible. Kardama Muni is special not because he was a great mystic, but because he was a great devotee. Therefore it is said here that for a great devotee like Kardama Muni, nothing is impossible. Although yogis can perform wonderful feats, as Kardama has already displayed, Kardama was more than a yogi because he was a great devotee of the Lord; therefore he was more glorious than an ordinary yogi. As it is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā*, "Out of the many yogis, he who is a devotee of the Lord is first class." For a person like Kardama Muni there is no question of being conditioned; he was already a liberated soul and better than the demigods, who are also conditioned. Although he was enjoying with his wife and many other women, he was above material, conditional life. He was beyond the position of a conditioned soul. He was transcendental to all material limitations.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 23. Devahuti's Lamentation » Verses:39,41, 42 Purport* ❧

KARDAMA MUNI AND PUNDARIKA VIDYANIDHI

Editorial

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.21.13) Kardama Muni says, "Your Lordship is the reservoir of all that can be understood by the nomenclature of goodness, and by experiencing You face to face, eye to eye, the perfection of sight has now been attained."

These statements are the pure devotional situation; for a devotee, the perfection of the senses is to engage in the service of the Lord. The sense of sight, when engaged in seeing the beauty of the Lord, is perfected; the power to hear, when engaged in hearing the glories of the Lord, is perfected; the power to taste, when one enjoys by eating *prasāda*, is perfected. When all the senses engage in relationship with the Personality of Godhead, one's perfection is technically called bhakti-yoga, which entails detaching the senses from material indulgence and attaching them to the service of the Lord. When one is freed from all designated conditional life and fully engages in the service of the Lord, one's service is called bhakti-yoga. For a person like Kardama Muni there is no question of being conditioned; he was already a liberated soul and better than the demigods, who are also conditioned. Although he was enjoying with his wife and many other women, he was above material, conditional life.

Similarly, Pundarik Vidyānidhi was a very

elevated devotee, a *mahā-bhāgavata*. However, if anyone would see him, they would think he was a *bhogī*, an enjoyer. He would wear costly garments and keep valuable rings on all ten fingers. He would sit on an opulent cushion and chew pan, spitting in a precious pot made of gold and *aṣṭadhātu*.

One may question how can a pure devotee be overcome by passion? The example is given of the tortoise; as soon as he likes he discloses his senses, and when he likes he pulls them within. That is the position of a pure devotee. He can wind up the senses, whenever he likes and he can exhibit the senses whenever he likes. On the whole, the senses are under his control. He is not under the control of the senses as are the ordinary persons.

Externally, Kardama Muni and Pundarik Vidyānidhi seemed to be a *bhogī*. But what was inside no one could understand. Only one who has vision can understand and see their real form. Those who only see what is on the outside are cheated. Many people are not serious to see the real thing. They only want external things. They want to be cheated, so that's what they get.

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— *From the book The Process of Inquiry by Gopal Jiu Publications » Part - II: Inquiries » Chapter seven - Ācāryas are Manifest not Made* 

THE GLORIES OF PUNDARIKA VIDYANIDHI

Srila Vrindavana Das Thakura

Sri Pundarika Vidyānidhi was a learned scholar and a very dear devotee of Lord Krishna. In order to glorify the eastern tract of land known as Cattagrama, the Supreme Lord induced him to appear there. Although the Lord personally appeared in Navadvīpa, He sighed deeply because of not seeing Vidyānidhi there. When Sri Mahāprabhu was manifesting His own opulent Vaikuntha pastimes in the city of Navadvīpa, He breathed heavily with feelings of separation from Vidyānidhi. One day after dancing, Gaura Rāya sat down and cried loudly as He exclaimed, “O My father, Pundarika. When will I see you, My dear father.” (In Vraja-līla, Pundarika was the father of Sri Rādhikā. That is why Sri Gaurasundara addressed him as father). Pundarika Vidyānidhi was such a dear associate of Lord Caitanya. Gaura Rāya manifested many such devotees in this world. The devotees could not at all understand why the Lord cried while calling this name. They said that ‘Pundarika’ refers to Krishna. But on hearing the name ‘Vidyānidhi,’ they began to consider.

They understood that he must be a dear devotee of the Lord. When the Lord regained His external consciousness, they all inquired from Him. “O Lord, for which devotee do You cry? Please tell us the truth. Let us have the good fortune of knowing him. Please tell us where he was born and what are his activities.” The Lord replied, “You are all indeed fortunate, for you have developed a desire to hear about him. All his characteristics are most wonderful. Simply by hearing his name, the entire world becomes purified. His external appearance is just like a materialist. No one can recognize him as a Vaiṣṇava. He took birth in Cattagrama and is a greatly learned *brāhmaṇa*. He is expert in following his religious duties and is honored by all. He was honored by all. Since he was a learned scholar, he was respected by all students. The *brāhmaṇas* highly regarded him because he was prosperous. Knowing him to be most pious, ordinary people learned religious principles from him. He constantly floats in the ocean of devotional service to Krishna. His body is decorated with the symptoms of ecstatic love like tears, shivering, and hairs standing on end. He does not take bath in the Ganges, for he fears touching her waters with his feet. He takes darśana of the Ganges only at night. Many people disrespect the Ganges by rinsing their mouths, brushing their teeth, and washing their hair in her waters. On seeing these activities, he feels pain at heart. For this reason he goes to see the Ganges at night. Now hear another of his wonderful characteristics.”

“He drinks the water of the Ganges before worshiping the Lord. Then he worships the Lord and executes his other regular duties. In this way he teaches religious principles to all learned scholars. He lives in Cattagrama, yet he also has a house here. He will come soon, then you will all see him. On seeing him, none of you will immediately recognize him; rather, you will simply consider him a materialist. I cannot have peace of mind without seeing him. Therefore all of you attract him to come here.”

After speaking in this way, the Lord became overwhelmed and began to cry and call out, “O Pundarika, O father!” The Lord cried loudly. Lord Chaitanya alone knows the glories of His devotees. Only one whom He favors may also know them. In this way the Lord attracted Pundarika, who thus decided to visit Navadvīpa. He came with many servants, *brāhmaṇas*, disciples, devotees, and paraphernalia. He came and secretly resided in Navadvīpa, where everyone saw him as a gross materialist. None of the Vaiṣṇavas knew him except Mukunda, who immediately recognized him.

The learned doctor Sri Mukunda knew him, for they were both born in Cattagrama. The Lord



was unlimitedly happy to know about the arrival of Vidyanidhi. But the Lord did not disclose this fact to any of the Vaishnavas. Pundarika appeared to be just like a materialist. Only Mukunda and Vasudeva Datta knew the glories of his ecstatic love. Gadadhara Pandita was very dear to Mukunda. He was a constant companion of Mukunda. Whatever news Mukunda heard, he would tell to Gadadhara. One day he said, "Today a wonderful Vaishnava has arrived. 'O Gadadhara Pandita', listen carefully. Would you like to see a Vaishnava? Today I will show you a wonderful Vaishnava, so that you may think of me as your servant. If I introduce you to an extraordinary exalted Vaishnava, then please accept me as your servant in exchange. This will be my reward."

On hearing this, Gadadhara became very pleased. They immediately departed while chanting the name of Krishna. Vidyanidhi Mahashaya was sitting in his house when Gadadhara arrived before him. Gadadhara Pandita offered obeisances to Pundarika, who in turn offered him a seat. Vidyanidhi asked Mukunda, "What is his name, and where does he live? I can see that his body is effulgent due to his devotion to Vishnu. His appearance and nature are both enchanting."

Mukunda said, "His name is Sri Gadadhara. He is fortunate because since his childhood he has been detached from family life. He is known as the son of Madhava Mishra. All the Vaishnavas have great affection for him. He is constantly engaged in devotional service and always associates with devotees. On hearing your name, he came to see you."

Vidyanidhi was greatly satisfied to hear this and began to speak to him with great respect. The way Pundarika Mahashaya sat there, it appeared as if he were a prince. He sat on an opulent reddish couch decorated with brass armrests. There were three opulent canopies above his head. Next to him there was an opulent bed covered with fine silk cloth and having pillows on all sides. There were five or seven big and small waterpots. There was an opulent brass container filled with already prepared pan. Two opulent spittoons were on his two sides. He smiled as he chewed pan and looked at his lips. Two persons constantly fanned him with opulent fans made from peacock feathers. His forehead was decorated with sandalwood paste tilaka and dots of sandalwood paste mixed with vermillion. What can I say about the wonderful style of his hair, which was anointed with fragrant *āmalakī* oil? By the influence of devotional service, his body appeared like that of Cupid. Anyone who did not know him would certainly consider him a prince. In front was a wonderful palanquin equipped with all accessories. By his paraphernalia, he appeared to be a materialist.

He is a great Vaishnava? His appearance with his opulent foodstuffs, opulent dress, and opulent hair style is completely like that of a materialist. Gadadhara had good faith in him after hearing about him, but now that he saw him that faith was lost. Understanding the heart of Gadadhara, Sri Mukunda happily began to reveal Vidyanidhi's glories. On seeing Gadadhara's disturbed mind, Mukunda began to accurately reveal

Vidyanidhi to him. By the mercy of Krishna, nothing is unseen or unknown to Gadadhara, for Krishna is the Lord of maya. Then Mukunda, who sweetly sings the glories of Krishna, began to recite some verses glorifying devotional service.

*rākṣasī pūtanāśīṣu khāite nirdayā
īṣvare vadhite gelā kālakūṭa laiyā*

The witch Putana mercilessly kills children. She tried to kill the Lord with poison.

*tāhāre o mātr-pada delena īṣvare
nā bhaje abodha jīva hena dayālere*

Yet the Lord awarded her the position of mother. How can a foolish person not worship such a merciful Lord?

*aho bakī yaṁ stana-kāla-kūṭaṁ
jighāṁsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī
lebhe gatim dhātry-ucitāṁ tato 'nyam
kaṁ vā dayāluṁ śaraṇaṁ vrajema*

Alas, how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than He who granted the position of mother to a she-demon [Putana] although she was unfaithful and she prepared deadly poison to be sucked from her breast?

*pūtanā loka-bāla-ghnī rākṣasī rudhirāśanā
jighāṁsayāpi haraye stanam dattvāpa sad-gatim*

Putana was always hankering for the blood of human children, and with that desire she came to kill Krishna; but because she offered her breast to the Lord, she attained the greatest achievement.

As soon as Vidyanidhi heard this description of devotional service, he began to weep. The unprecedented flow of tears from his eyes appeared like an incarnation of Gangadevi. All the symptoms of ecstatic love like tears, shivering, perspiration, losing consciousness, hairs standing on end, and loud shouting simultaneously manifested in his body. He roared loudly while exclaiming, “Go on reciting! Go on reciting!” He could not remain steady and fell to the ground. He broke all the surrounding paraphernalia by the kicking of his feet. Nothing was spared. What happened to the opulent pan container and the nicely prepared pan? What happened to the waterpots that were used for drinking water? Where did the bed fall by the kick of his feet? Out of ecstatic love, he tore apart

his opulent clothes with his two hands. What happened to his opulently styled hair as he rolled on the ground and cried profusely? “O Krishna, O my Lord! O Krishna, O my life and soul! You have made my heart hard like wood or stone.” He lamented and cried loudly, “In Your present incarnation I have been deceived.” He fell to the ground and rolled about so forcefully that everyone thought, “Have his bones been broken to pieces?” He shivered so vigorously out of ecstatic love that even ten men could not hold him still. Clothes, bedding, waterpots, bowls, and all other paraphernalia were smashed by the kicking of his feet. There was not a single item spared. All of his servants then pacified him and tried to recover whatever was left. After revealing his ecstatic love for some time in this way, he remained lying there unconscious in ecstasy.

Vidyanidhi was completely merged in an ocean of bliss with no symptom of life manifest in his entire body. After seeing this, Gadadhara was struck with wonder and became somewhat worried. “I have disrespected such a great personality. At what inauspicious time did I come to see him?” Gadadhara Pandita embraced Mukunda with great satisfaction and bathed him in tears of love “O Mukunda, you have acted as my real friend, for you have shown me the great devotee Vidyanidhi Bhattacharya. Is there another Vaishnava like him in the three worlds? In fact, the three worlds become purified by seeing his devotional service. I was able to avoid a great danger because you were with me. On seeing his materialistic appearance, I considered him a materialistic Vaishnava. You understood my mind and revealed the devotional mood of Pundarika. I have committed an offense, so please have him bestow mercy on me so that my offense is nullified. All the devotees who are on the path of devotional service must have a spiritual master. So far I do not have an instructor. My desire is to take mantra initiation from him. If I become his disciple, then he will forgive all the offenses that I have committed by disregarding him.” After contemplating in this way, Gadadhara expressed to Mukunda his desire to take initiation. Hearing his proposal, Mukunda was greatly satisfied. He glorified that proposal by saying, “Very good. Very good.”

After six hours the most grave Vidyanidhi regained his external consciousness and sat down peacefully. The unlimited tears of Gadadhara Pandita made his entire body wet. Seeing this, Vidyanidhi Mahashaya was most pleased. He embraced Gadadhara and held him to his chest. Gadadhara stood there in awe and reverence. Then Mukunda revealed Gadadhara's heart's desire. “On seeing your behavior and opulence, he previously had some doubt. In order to atone for his

offenses, he has now decided to take initiation from you. He is a renounced devotee of Vishnu, and since his childhood he has shown the experience of mature person. Moreover, he is the qualified son in the family of Madhava Mishra. He has been a constant companion of the Lord since his childhood, therefore Pundarika and Gadadhara make the perfect Guru and disciple. Please select an auspicious day to initiate him in the mantra of your worshipable Lord.” On hearing this, Pundarika Vidyanidhi smiled and said, “I have obtained a precious jewel by the arrangement of providence. I will certainly initiate him, there is no doubt about it. By good fortune, after many births one attains such a disciple. The most auspicious moment will be found on the *Dvādaśī* of the next waxing moon. Your desire will be fulfilled on this day.” Hearing this, Gadadhara happily offered him obeisances.

—Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata by Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura » *Madhya-khaṇḍa* » Chapter Seven: The Meeting of Gadadhara and Pundarika Chaitanya 9 - 120 » Translated by Bhumiapati Dāsa

THE PURE DEVOTEE Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur

*kabe mui baiṣṇabe cinibo hari hari
baiṣṇaba-caraṇa kalyanera khani
mātibo hṛdaye dhori'*

O Hari! O Hari! When will I realize who is a Vaishnava? Their feet are the treasure-house of good fortune. Holding their feet in my heart, I will become intoxicated with divine love.

*baiṣṇaba-ṭhākura aprākṛta sadā
nirdoṣa ānandamoya
kṛṣṇa-nāme prīti joḍe udāśīna
jibete doyādra hoyā*

They are always above the influence of the material modes, free from faults, and full of bliss. They have love of Krishna's holy name. They are not attached, nor repelled by matter, their heart is melting with compassion for the living entities.

*abhimāna hīna bhajane prabīna
biṣayete anāsakta
antara-bahire niṣkaṇṭha sadā
nitya-līlā-anurakta*

They are free of pride, expert in bhajan, and unattached

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

to material sense gratification. They are always free of duplicity, inside and outside, and attached to the Lord's eternal pastimes.

*kaniṣṭha madhyama uttama prabhede
baiṣṇaba tri-bidha gaṇi
kaniṣṭhe ādara madhyame praṇāti
uttame śūsṛiṣā śuni*

There are three categories of Vaishnavas: the *kaniṣṭha*, *madhyama* and *uttama*. We should respect the *kaniṣṭha*'s, pay humble obeisance to the *madhyamas*, and humbly serve the *uttamas*, thus I have heard.

*je jena baiṣṇaba ciniyā loiyā
ādara koirbo jabe
baiṣṇabera kṛpā jāhe sarba-siddhi
abaśya pāibo tabe*

When will I be able to recognise the levels of the Vaishnavas and thus be able to properly respect them in that way? Then I will surely receive their mercy which is bestowing all perfection.

*baiṣṇaba-caritra sarbadā pabitra
jei ninde himsā kori'
bhakatibinoda nā sambhāṣe ta're
thāke sadā mauna dhori'*

The character of the Vaishnava is always pure. Those who criticise Vaishnavas are disliked by Bhaktivinoda (me) and, always keeping silence, I do not converse with them.

— From *Kalyana Kalpataru* » Third Branch: Overflowing Spiritual Emotions (Ucchvasa) » Part 2: Prarthana Lalasa-mayī » Song 7 – The Pure Devotee » Translated by Vrajsevika devi dasi

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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Śrī Putradā Ekādaśī

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KARDAMA PACIFIES DEVAHUTI

Sri Maitreya R̥ṣi

After coming back to his hermitage, Kardama Muni divided himself into nine personalities just to give pleasure to Devahuti, the daughter of Manu, who was eager for sex life. In that way he enjoyed with her for many, many years, which passed just like a moment. In that aerial mansion, Devahuti, in the company of her handsome husband, situated on an excellent bed that increased sexual desires, could not realize how much time was passing. While the couple, who eagerly longed for sexual pleasure, were thus enjoying themselves by virtue of mystic powers, a hundred autumns passed like a brief span of time. The powerful Kardama Muni was the knower of everyone's heart, and he could grant whatever one desired. Knowing the spiritual soul, he regarded her as half of his body. Dividing himself into nine forms, he impregnated Devahuti with nine discharges of semen. Immediately afterward, on the same day, Devahuti gave birth to nine female children, all charming in every limb and fragrant with the scent of the red lotus flower.

When she saw her husband about to leave home, she smiled externally, but at heart she was agitated and distressed. She stood and scratched the ground with her foot, which was radiant with the luster of her gem like nails. Her head bent down, she spoke in slow yet

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charming accents, suppressing her tears.

Sri Devahuti said: My lord, you have fulfilled all the promises you gave me, yet because I am your surrendered soul, you should give me fearlessness too. My dear *brāhmaṇa*, as far as your daughters are concerned, they will find their own suitable husbands and go away to their respective homes. But who will give me solace after your departure as a sannyasi? Until now we have simply wasted so much of our time in sense gratification, neglecting to cultivate knowledge of the Supreme Lord. Not knowing your transcendental situation, I have loved you while remaining attached to the objects of the senses. Nonetheless, let the affinity I have developed for you rid me of all fear. Association for sense gratification is certainly the path of bondage. But the same type of association, performed with a saintly person, leads to the path of liberation, even if performed without knowledge.

Anyone whose work is not meant to elevate him to religious life, anyone whose religious ritualistic performances do not raise him to renunciation, and anyone situated in renunciation that does not lead him to devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, must be considered dead, although he is breathing. My lord, surely I have been solidly cheated by the insurmountable illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for in spite of having obtained your association, which gives liberation from material bondage, I did not seek such liberation.

Recalling the words of Lord Vishnu, the merciful sage Kardama replied as follows to Svayambhuva Manu's praiseworthy daughter, Devahuti, who was speaking words full of renunciation.

The sage Kardama said: Do not be disappointed with yourself, O princess. You are actually praiseworthy. The infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead will shortly enter your womb as your son. You have undertaken sacred vows. God will bless you. Hence you should worship the Lord with great faith, through sensory control, religious observances, austerities and gifts of your money in charity. The Personality of Godhead, being worshiped by you, will spread my name and fame. He will vanquish the knot of your heart by becoming your son and teaching knowledge of Brahman.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa)* » Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 23. Devahuti's Lamentation » Verses: 44– 57 and Chapter 24. The Renunciation of Kardama Muni » Verses: 1 – 4 . Translation by His Divine Grace A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



THE APPEARANCE OF LORD KAPILA

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

Having complete faith in the instructions of Kardama, Devahuti worshipped the changeless Supreme Lord, her future guru, with veneration. After a long time, the Supreme Lord, Madhusudana, who is like fire in wood, controlled by the strength of *bhakti* of Kardama, made his appearance. At that time, in the sky, devatas in the clouds played instruments, the gandharvas sang in praise of the Lord and the apsaras danced in joy. Flowers were dropped by flying devatas from the sky. All the directions, waters and minds became satisfied.

Brahma, along with the sages headed by Marichi, came to the hermitage of Kardama, which was surrounded by the Sarasvati River. Independent Brahma, knowing that the Lord had appeared in a *śuddha-sattva* portion to teach enumeration of the elements, worshipped the Lord's future activities with pure heart and then spoke

to Kardama and his wife with joyful senses.

Sri Brahma said: O son! O sage who gives respect! You have accomplished my sincere worship since you have accepted my instructions with respect for me. Service to the father should be rendered exactly in this manner by good sons. The son should accept the commands of his elder with respect, saying "I will do as you have instructed." O son! These chaste daughters with thin waists will increase the creation with their powerful portions many times. Therefore please give away your daughters to the foremost sages according to qualities and liking, and spread your fame throughout the universe. O sage! I know that the original Lord, the treasure of the living beings, has appeared by his own energy, assuming the body of Kapila.

O daughter of Manu! In order to uproot *karma* by the methods of *jñāna* and *vijñāna*, with golden hair, lotus eyes, lotus feet marked with the lotus, this Lord, killer of the demon Kaitabha, entering your womb, will travel

over the world, cutting the knot of ignorance and false knowledge. The chief of perfected sages, approved by the *ācāryas* of Sankhya philosophy, he will take the name Kapila in this world and will increase your fame. Having reassured the couple, Brahma, along with the Kumaras and Narada, departed for Satyaloka on his swan carrier. After Brahma departed, Kardama, as ordered by him, according to scriptural rules, then gave his daughters to the creators of population. Kardama gave his daughter Kala to Marichi, and Anasuya to Atri. He gave Shraddha to Angira, and Havirbhu to Pulastya. He gave qualified Gati to Pulaha, the chaste Kriya to Kratu, Khyati to Bhrigu, and Arundhati to Vasishtha. He gave Shanti, by whom sacrifice becomes successful, to Atharva. He took care of those best of *brāhmaṇas* who he had got married, along with their wives. Then those sages, married, taking leave of Kardama, returned their hermitages in joy.

Understanding that the Lord, chief of the deities, had appeared, Kardama approached Him in a solitary place and, offering respects, spoke to Him. Oh! In this world, the *devatās* become pleased with persons burning in material existence from their sinful actions only after a long time. The yogis attempt to see Your impersonal feature in solitary places by complete *samādhi* through *yoga*, but this realization is achieved only after many births. The Supreme Lord, who favors His devotees, not considering our neglect of Him, has today appeared in the house of a materialist. You, the Supreme Lord, desiring to give a method of knowledge, and increasing the honor of the devotees, have descended in my house to make your words true.

O Lord! although You have no material form, You have Your own innumerable forms. They truly are Your transcendental forms, which are pleasing to Your devotees. I surrender unto Kapila, whose other form is *prakṛti*, who is also the jīva, the *mahat-tattva*, time, *sūtra*, *ahankāra*, the *devatās* of the directions, the universe inhabited by Your internal energy, and the possessor of independent energies. Now I ask something from You, the master of the progeny. I have become free of debt because of You, and fulfilled all my desires. Taking the renounced order, I will wander about without lamentation, remembering You in my heart.

The Lord said: What is spoken by Me is authoritative for the people, for ultimate and worldly affairs. Similarly, I have taken birth because of what I said to you— that I would be your son. Thus my words are true. Please understand that I have appeared in this world to explain the principles suitable for realizing the self for those desiring liberation from the subtle body.

Understand that this path, difficult to know, was lost in time. I have taken this form to introduce this knowledge again. You have requested me, so then depart when you please. Having conquered unconquerable death by offering your activities to Me, you should worship Me for immortality. Seeing Me, self-effulgent, dwelling in the hearts of all beings, as *antaryamī* in your heart by your intelligence, free from lamentation, you will achieve fearlessness. I will give My mother spiritual knowledge which ends all *karmas*, by which she will also attain fearlessness.

After Kapila had spoken to Him in this way, Kardama, pleased, circumambulated him and left for the forest. Accepting the vow of silence, taking exclusive shelter of the Lord, he wandered the earth alone, without fire and without shelter. He fixed his mind on the Brahman which is beyond auspicious and inauspicious, which has spiritual qualities and is devoid of material qualities, and which is realized by pure *bhakti*. He was devoid of false ego and possessiveness, and did not see with duality. He regarded everything equally, and perceived the state of *bhakti* within himself. His intelligence was peaceful, not functioning externally. He was sober, like an ocean without waves.

— Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 24. The Renunciation of Kardama Muni » Verses: 5– 44.
Translation by His Holiness Bhamu Swami ॐ

WHY DID KARDAMA MUNI LEAVE HOME ?

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Kardama Muni was to leave his family life to completely engage in the service of the Lord. But since he knew that the Lord Himself, as Kapila, had taken birth in his home as his own son, why was he preparing to leave home to search out self-realization or God realization? God Himself was present in his home—why should he leave home?

Such a question may certainly arise. But here it is said that whatever is spoken in the Vedas and whatever is practiced in accordance with the injunctions of the Vedas is to be accepted as authoritative in society. Vedic authority says that a householder must leave home after his fiftieth year. *Pañcāśordhvaṁ vanam vrajet*: one must leave his family life and enter the forest after the age of fifty. This is an authoritative statement of the Vedas, based on the division of social life into four departments of activity—*brahmacārī*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*.

Kardama Muni practiced *yoga* very rigidly as a *brahmacārī* before his marriage, and he became so



powerful and attained so much mystic power that his father, Brahma, ordered him to marry and beget children as a householder. Kardama did that also; he begot nine good daughters and one son, Kapila Muni, and thus his householder duty was also performed nicely, and now his duty was to leave. Even though he had the Supreme Personality of Godhead as his son, he had to respect the authority of the Vedas. This is a very important lesson. Even if one has God in his home as his son, one should still follow the Vedic injunctions. It is stated, *mahājano yena gataḥsa panthāḥ*: [Cc. Madhya 17.186] one should traverse the path which is followed by great personalities.

Kardama Muni's example is very instructive, for in spite of having the Supreme Personality of Godhead as his son, he left home just to obey the authority of the Vedic injunction. Kardama Muni states here the main purpose of his leaving home: while traveling all over the world as a mendicant, he would always remember the Supreme Personality of Godhead within his heart and thereby be freed from all the anxieties of material existence.

The main purpose of *sannyāsa* life is to be in constant companionship with the Supreme Lord, either by thinking of Him within the heart or hearing of Him through aural reception. In this age, hearing is more important than thinking because one's thinking may be disturbed by mental agitation, but if one concentrates on hearing, he will be forced to associate

with the sound vibration of Krishna. Krishna and the sound vibration "Krishna" are nondifferent, so if one loudly vibrates Hare Krishna, he will be able to think of Krishna immediately. This process of chanting is the best process of self-realization in this age; therefore Lord Chaitanya preached it so nicely for the benefit of all humanity.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 24. The Renunciation of Kardama Muni » Verses:35, Purport by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

BIRTH AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SUPREME LORD

*Sri Sridhar Swami, Sri Madhusudana Saraswati,
Sri Vishavanatha Chakravarti Thakur
and Sri Baladeva Vidyabhushana*

*janma karma ca me divyam evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punarjanma naiti māmeti so 'rjuna*
— *Bhagavad-gītā* 4.9

Subodhinī

Sri Sridhara Swami

"I take birth by My own free will. My activities are for maintaining religion. My birth and activities are divine, not of this world. Both are actually performed by Me only for benefiting others (the living entities). He who understands this, will, giving up his misidentification with the body, not take another birth, but will attain Me".

Gūḍha-artha-dīpikā

Sri Madhusudana Saraswati

When Krishna says: "My birth, it means, My play-acting of taking birth, as I am certainly always divine (unconditioned by material nature) and My body is eternal, made of bliss and knowledge. So also are My activities imitations of (common) acts, they are maintaining the universe by establishing the religion. As I am the eternally divine Lord, My activities are also divine. They are not under the influence of the three modes of material nature. They cannot be performed by anyone else. They are uncommon. One has to understand the truth in this way, as I have explained it, desisting from confusion."

"Of course, idiots mistake My birth as caused by pregnancy, and My activities to be for selfish enjoyment because they mistake Me to be a normal human."

One can understand the supreme truth when one removes the ignorance of His personality, His eternal form of bliss and knowledge and understands that



Sri Vishwanatha Chakravarti Thakur

even though He is unborn, He imitates taking birth, and even though He is not acting under the influence of illusion, He imitates activities for the sake of all others, for bestowing mercy.

The Supreme Lord says: "He who realizes this truth, to him also the nature of his own self is revealed, and after giving up this body, he will not take birth again but he will come to Me, Lord Vasudeva, whose eternal body is made of bliss and knowledge, Oh Arjuna! He will be liberated from this cycle of birth and death."

Sārārtha-varṣiṇī

Sri Vishwanatha Chakravarti Thakur

In this verse, the Supreme Lord explains "One shall become accomplished simply by understanding the true nature of My birth, which was previously described, and My activities after birth. They are divine, *divyam*."

Sri Ramanujacarya and Sri Madhusudana Saraswati explains the word *divyam* as beyond the three modes of material nature. Srila Sridhara Swami explains it as not related to this world. As this world is a creation of the three material modes, his explanation actually also means the same, beyond the three material modes. Since the Lord's birth and activities are beyond the three material modes, they are eternal.

And as is also confirmed by Srila Jiva Goswami when

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he quotes from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in his *Bhāgavata-sandarbhā*, *na vidyate yasya ca janma karma vā*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead doesn't take birth, and He doesn't perform any (material) activities (*Srīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 8.3.8). The word *divyam* also means that the Lord cannot be approached by logic or arguments on the strength of the words of the revealed scriptures.

In *Puruṣa-bodhanī Upaniṣad*, of the *Pippalāda-śākhā* of the *Atharva Veda* it is said: *eko devo nitya-līlāmurakto bhakta-vyāpī bhakta-hṛdyantar-ātmā*—"One Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternally engaged in many, many transcendental forms in relationships with His unalloyed devotees. He is manifest in their hearts."

The eternal nature of the Lord's birth and activities has also been treated at length in many places in the *Śrī Bhāgavatāmṛta*. Thus, the word *tattvataḥ* means to know the Supreme Lord in truth. That means to understand His birth and activities as eternal, accepting His statements as they are, as He has explained that "I am unborn and My body is indestructible *ajo 'pi samn avyayātmā* (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.6), and My birth and activities are divine *janma karma ca me divyam* (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.9)." Thus, the word *tattvataḥ* means to know the Supreme Lord in truth, accepting His words as they are. There's no means or stratagem or argument required. They are always eternal.

As is explained in the verse (*Bhagavad-gītā* 17.23), *om tat sat iti nirdeśo brahmaṇas tri-vidhaḥ smṛtaḥ* the word *om*, *tat*, and *sat* are used to indicate the Supreme Absolute Truth. Therefore *tattva* means the nature of being the Absolute Truth. Taking this meaning, *tattvataḥ* in this sense means "My birth and activities are divine, being of Him Who is the personified form of the Absolute Truth. He who understands this, will not take birth again after giving up his present body, but will come to Me." Giving up the body refers to not taking birth. "After giving up the body, he who knows, doesn't take birth again, but even before that, without giving up the body, he attains Me."

Sri Ramanujacarya writes, paraphrasing Sri Krishna: "True knowledge of My transcendental birth and activities completely destroy all sins that impede one on the path to attaining My full shelter. Only those dear devotees who have taken shelter of Me attain Me, even in this very life."

Śrī-gūā-bhūṣaṇa

Sri Baladeva Vidyabhushana

"Liberation is very difficult to attain even by the strict practice of thousands of troublesome processes, but it is easily attainable to those following the path of devotion to Me just by hearing about My birth and My



Sri Baladeva Vidyabhushana

deeds. For this purpose I appear, *sambhavāmi yuge yuge* (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.8) millennium after millennium to deliver My devotees. Being the Supreme Lord over all, even though I am one, desiring to uphold truth, I appear in many forms such as Narasimhadev, Lord Ramacandra, etc, just as a Vaidurya gem changes colour yet remains one. Whenever and wherever I appear, My appearance and My dealings in relationship with My devotees both are spiritual, beyond the material modes, and eternal.”

As it is stated in the Vedic scriptures: *eko devo nitya-līlāmurakto bhakta-vyāpī bhakta-hṛdyantar-ātmā* —“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternally engaged in many, many transcendental forms in relationships with His unalloyed devotees, in the past, present, and future. Thus, the Vedas declare My birth and activities to be spiritual, and I also confirm this. O Arjuna! One who understands this in truth, having firm faith in My words, without reasoning, he will not take birth again in this material world after giving up this present body, but he will come to Me. He will enter into My pleasing pastimes, he will be liberated.”

Tattvataḥ can also refer to the Vedic version *tat tvam asi*, meaning You (the Lord) are the Supreme Brahman,

accepting which leads to liberation. Then, *tattvataḥ* will not be translated as knowing My birth and activities in truth, but as knowing them as being of the nature of Brahman. In other words, as is stated in the Vedic scriptures *tam eva viditvāati mṛtyum eti nānyaḥ panthā vidyate 'yanāya* — "One can attain the perfect stage of liberation from birth and death simply by knowing the Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and there is no other way to achieve this perfection." More proof for the eternal nature of the Lord's birth, etc, is seen in more detail in other places.

— *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* » Chapter 4 - Transcendental Knowledge
» Verse: 9. Translated by Vrajseviḥ devi dasi ॐ

HOW SHOULD ONE APPROACH THE SUPREME LORD?

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur

The Supreme Lord cannot be known through our intellectual efforts. Unless He gives us the power of knowing Him, we cannot know Him. It is His mercy. If He is not at all merciful to us, we won't be able, by our strenuous exertions, to approach Him. The thing is that we have to approach Him and He has to give us the facility of approaching Him. He is the Autocrat – He is the Despot – He has the fullest freedom. We cannot, by our flimsy little way of thinking and by any of our attempts, reach Him in any way. So craving is the only need in us by which we can surmount all these difficulties, the barriers and the impediments of these phenomena. The objective references of the reciprocated entities of our senses, will never disclose Him unless He is so lenient to show us that latitude as to be approachable by us. This is the only method by which we can approach the Absolute. It will be a tremendous task for us to have an access to Him through our intellectualism and labour and our senses confined to finite things. So we should show our aptitude for craving for His mercy. This is *bhakti*.

Bhakti represents devotion – transcendental devotion. Transcendental devotion need not be covered by our thoughts, fruitive attempts or desire for salvation. If we mix up *bhakti* with worldly ideas – finitudinal ideas- it will not lead us to the Absolute. Our ideas are wrong, they are quite inadequate for the purpose of leading us to the Absolute. Unless the Absolute condescends to be seen or worshipped by us, it would be quite useless to make efforts to approach Him. At the same time we need not be diffident to approach Him. We must not think that He is within our reach and expect that our prayer will be attended to by Him. So there are two cardinal points which we should examine. First of all He is Absolute. He should have a willing attitude to meet us and at the same we should also have some sort

of hankering for Him, leaving aside all sorts of troublous agents which we call our associates – leaving these aside we are to approach Him.

If we want to zoomorphise, phytomorphise or neuterise Godhead, if we try to find any masculine or feminine feature in Godhead, if the neuter aspect of Godhead is welcomed, we would be simply missing the opportunity of having an access to Him – we would be simply led astray. Godhead is not necessarily neuter, masculine or feminine as we see here with our defective and temporal senses. We should simply submit to Him.

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

—Bhagavad-gītā 18.66

Sri Krishna is singing this for Arjuna's purpose. He says He will give warranty of saving everyone of us if he or she submits to Him alone and none will have to run any risk of their own – all risks will lie in Him. He declares He will give us salvation. He is full – all sorts of inadequacies can be fulfilled by His true wishes. We can get rid of all our troubles if we simple submit to Him. As He should descend to meet us, so we should also be unalloyed and quite set free from all sorts of wrong associations we have imbibed during our social life, otherwise, carrying all these references of this mundane world, we cannot have access to the transcendental region.

We should not persist in our wrong ideas – in prayers such as 'give us this day our daily bread'. We cannot have a morsel of bread unless He desires to give it to us. We need not waste our time that way. These prayers are not required for approaching Him. We are quite ignorant of what is to be asked from Him. We do not know what will be for our good. We should only crave for His mercy. This is the only attitude we should have. Sri Krishna is the greatest attractor. We should want to be attracted by Him. The thing is if we have diffidence to be attracted by Him, if we try to avoid or evade His conference of mercy on us, we should be simply entangling ourselves with the measuring temperament. Now we are very busy to measure with our senses all the finitudinal objects of this universe. This is the empiric education. This sort of empiric education is offered to us to impede our course towards the transcendental region. So we should be very careful not be deluded by the influence of the measuring tendency – we should be very careful not to be degraded by this. We should

not accept the policy of retaliation – for by doing so we should be simply engaging ourselves for that purpose only.

We should be always careful not to be meddling with external ideas and thoughts. If we engage ourselves with all these things in order to have some enjoyment of our senses, we should surely be misguided by alluring friends of the phenomena. The finiteness of these things is quite inadequate for our purpose. We require the full thing – the Absolute. We should simply part with the wrong ideas and thoughts which we have incorporated with us. The phenomenon should be deleted – should be abandoned – during the course of our journey to the transcendental plane. The Absolute is He who does not require a finite object or a finite place. He has infinite, eternal knowledge. He has got eternal expansion. He is full of bliss. We are always hankering after bliss – but bliss can never be had here. So meddling with the undesirable objects of the phenomena, we cannot expect to reach that destination. So the only course is *bhakti*. We should not attempt *karma*, *jñāna*, rationalism, agnosticism, good action, charity and all such rubbish. They are the impediments of our approach to the object. The Object should be the Absolute.

— From conversation with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Thakur at Sri Gaudiya Matha, Kolkata. June 29, 1935, Transcribed by Anil Kanta Ganguly. Printed in "The Harmonist" July 12, 1935



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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Lord Kapila's Teachings - Part 1

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A promise to give up attachments which are unfavourable to Devotional Service

&

UNAUTHORIZED SAMPRADAYAS

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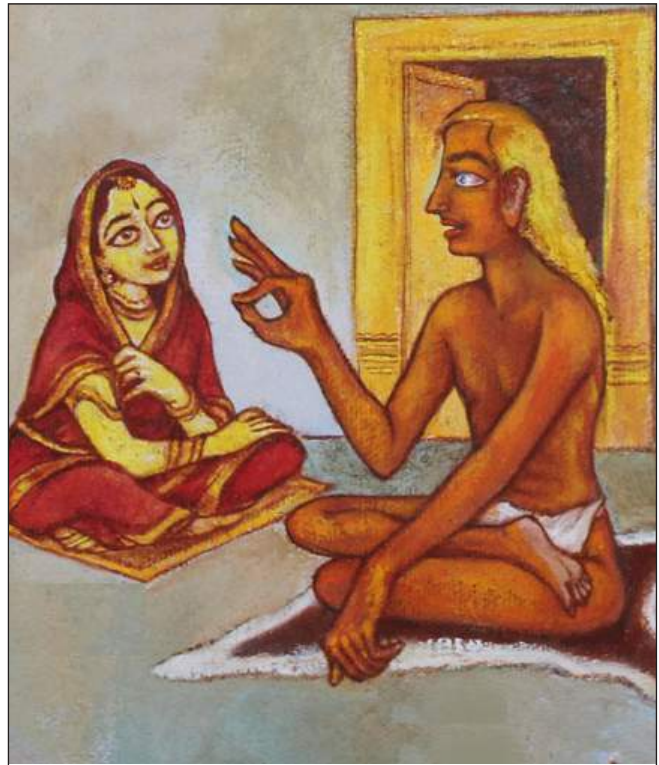
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LORD KAPILA INTRUCTS DEVAHUTI

SRI MAITREYA RṢI

When Kardama left for the forest, Lord Kapila stayed on the strand of the Bindu-sarovara to please His mother, Devahuti. Then Kapila, who could show her the ultimate goal of the Absolute Truth, was sitting leisurely before her, Devahuti remembered the words Brahma had spoken to her, and she therefore began to question Kapila as follows:

Devahuti said: I am very sick of the disturbance caused by my material senses, for because of this sense disturbance, my Lord, I have fallen into the abyss of ignorance. Your Lordship is my only means of getting out of this darkest region of ignorance because You are my transcendental eye, which, by Your mercy only, I have attained after many, many births. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the origin and Supreme Lord of all living entities. You have arisen to disseminate the rays of the sun in order to dissipate the darkness of the ignorance of the universe. Now be pleased, my Lord, to dispel my great delusion. Due to my feeling of false ego, I have been engaged by Your *māyā* and have identified myself with the body and consequent bodily relations. I have taken shelter of Your lotus feet because You are the only person of whom to take shelter. You are the axe which can

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

cut the tree of material existence. I therefore offer my obeisances unto You, who are the greatest of all transcendentalists, and I inquire from You as to the relationship between man and woman and between spirit and matter.

Maitreya said: After hearing of His mother's uncontaminated desire for transcendental realization, the Lord thanked her within Himself for her questions, and thus, His face smiling, He explained the path of the transcendentalists, who are interested in self-realization.

The Personality of Godhead answered: The yoga system which relates to the Lord and the individual soul, which is meant for the ultimate benefit of the living entity, and which causes detachment from all happiness and distress in the material world, is the highest yoga system. O most pious mother, I shall now explain unto you the ancient yoga system, which I explained formerly to the great sages. It is serviceable and practical in every way. The stage in which the consciousness of the living entity is attracted by the three modes of material nature is called conditional life. But when that same consciousness is attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one is situated in the consciousness of liberation.

When one is completely cleansed of the impurities of lust and greed produced from the false identification of the body as "I" and bodily possessions as "mine," one's mind becomes purified. In that pure state he transcends the stage of so-called material happiness and distress. Then the soul can see himself to be transcendental to material existence and always self-effulgent, never fragmented, although very minute in size. Thus situated in the position of self-realization, by practice of knowledge and renunciation in devotional service, one sees everything in the right perspective; he becomes indifferent to material existence, and the material influence acts less powerfully upon him.

Perfection in self-realization cannot be attained by any kind of *yogī* unless he engages in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for that is the only auspicious path.

*prasaṅgam ajaraṁ pāśam
ātmanaḥ kawayo viduḥ
sa eva sādhuṣu kṛto
mokṣa-dvāram apāvṛtam*

Every learned man knows very well that attachment for the material is the greatest entanglement of the spirit soul. But that same attachment, when applied to the self-realized devotees, opens the door of liberation.

The symptoms of a *sādhū* are that he is tolerant, merciful and friendly to all living entities. He has no enemies, he is peaceful, he abides by the scriptures, and all his characteristics are sublime. Such a *sādhū* engages in staunch devotional service to the Lord without deviation. For the sake of the Lord he renounces all other connections, such as family relationships and friendly acquaintances within the world. Engaged constantly in chanting and hearing about Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the *sādhū*s do not suffer from material miseries because they are always filled with thoughts of My pastimes and activities.

O My mother, O virtuous lady, these are the qualities of great devotees who are free from all attachment. You must seek attachment to such holy men, for this counteracts the pernicious effects of material attachment. In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin.

Consciously engaged in devotional service in the association of devotees, a person gains distaste for sense gratification, both in this world and in the next, by constantly thinking about the activities of the Lord. This process of Krishna consciousness is the easiest process of mystic power; when one is actually situated on that path of devotional service, he is able to control the mind. By not engaging in the service of the modes of material nature but by developing Krishna consciousness, knowledge in renunciation, and by practicing yoga, in which the mind is always fixed in devotional service unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one achieves My association in this very life, for I am the Supreme Personality, the Absolute Truth.

On hearing this statement of the Lord, Devahuti inquired: What kind of devotional service is worth developing and practicing to help me easily and immediately attain the service of Your lotus feet? The mystic yoga system, as You have explained, aims at the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is meant for completely ending material existence. Please let me know the nature of that yoga system. How many ways are there by which one can understand in truth that sublime yoga? My dear son, Kapila, after all, I am a woman. It is very difficult for me to understand the Absolute Truth because my intelligence is not very great. But if You will kindly explain it to me, even though I am not very intelligent, I can understand it and thereby feel transcendental happiness.

Sri Maitreya said: After hearing the statement of His

mother, Kapila could understand her purpose, and He became compassionate towards her because of being born of her body. He described the *sāṅkhya* system of philosophy, which is a combination of devotional service and mystic realization, as received by disciplic succession.

Lord Kapila said: The senses are symbolic representations of the demigods, and their natural inclination is to work under the direction of the Vedic injunctions. As the senses are representatives of the demigods, so the mind is the representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The mind's natural duty is to serve. When that service spirit is engaged in devotional service to the Personality of Godhead, without any motive, that is far better even than salvation. Bhakti, devotional service, dissolves the subtle body of the living entity without separate effort, just as fire in the stomach digests all that we eat.

*naikātmatām me spṛhayanti kecin
mat-pāda-sevābhiratā mad-īhāḥ
ye 'nyonyato bhāgavatāḥ prasajya
sabhājayante mama pauruṣaṇi*

A pure devotee, who is attached to the activities of devotional service and who always engages in the service of My lotus feet, never desires to become one with Me. Such a devotee, who is unflinchingly engaged, always glorifies My pastimes and activities.

O My mother, My devotees always see the smiling face of My form, with eyes like the rising morning sun. They like to see My various transcendental forms, which are all benevolent, and they also talk favorably with Me. Upon seeing the charming forms of the Lord, smiling and attractive, and hearing His very pleasing words, the pure devotee almost loses all other consciousness. His senses are freed from all other engagements, and he becomes absorbed in devotional service. Thus in spite of his unwillingness, he attains liberation without separate endeavour.

Thus because he is completely absorbed in thought of Me, the devotee does not desire even the highest benediction obtainable in the upper planetary systems, including Satyaloka. He does not desire the eight material perfections obtained from mystic yoga, nor does he desire to be elevated to the kingdom of God. Yet even without desiring them, the devotee enjoys, even in this life, all the offered benedictions. My dear mother, devotees who receive such transcendental opulences are never bereft of them; neither weapons nor the change of time can destroy such opulences. Because the devotees accept Me as their friend, their

relative, their son, preceptor, benefactor and Supreme Deity, they cannot be deprived of their possessions at any time.

Thus the devotee who worships Me, the all-pervading Lord of the universe, in unflinching devotional service, gives up all aspirations to be promoted to heavenly planets or to become happy in this world with wealth, children, cattle, home or anything in relationship with the body. I take him to the other side of birth and death. The terrible fear of birth and death can never be forsaken by anyone who resorts to any shelter other than Myself, for I am the almighty Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the original source of all creation, and also the Supreme Soul of all souls.

*mad-bhayād vāti vāto 'yaṁ
sūryas tapati mad-bhayāt
varṣatīndro dahaty agnir
mṛtyuś carati mad-bhayāt*

It is because of My supremacy that the wind blows out of fear of Me; the sun shines out of fear of Me, and the lord of the clouds, Indra, sends forth showers out of fear of Me. Fire burns out of fear of Me, and death goes about taking its toll out of fear of Me.

The yogīs equipped with transcendental knowledge and renunciation and engaged in devotional service for their eternal benefit, take shelter of My lotus feet, and since I am the Lord, they are thus eligible to enter into the kingdom of Godhead without fear. Therefore persons whose minds are fixed on the Lord engage in the intensive practice of devotional service. That is the only means for attainment of the final perfection of life.

— Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo
» Chapter 25: The Glories of Devotional Service » Verses: 5–44 » Translation
by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupada

BHAKTI-PRAKĪLĀ-BHĀVA VARJANĀṅGĪKĀRA

*A promise to give up attachments which are
unfavourable to Devotional Service*

Srīla Bhaktivinod Thakur

(1)

*keśava! tuvā jagata vicitra
karama-vipāke, bhava-vana bhrama-i,
pekhaluṁ raṅga bahu citra*

O Lord Kesava! Your universe is amazing. Wandering and wandering in this forest of material existence due to the ripening of the fruits of my past activities, I have seen many varieties of plays.

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*tuwā pada-vismṛti, ā-mara jantranā,
kleśa-dahane dohi' jāi
kapila, patañjali, gautama, kanabhojī,
jaimini, bauddha āowe dhāi'*

Forgetfulness of Your lotus feet makes me walk towards the agony of death, burning with anguish in so many troubles, even though I am taking help from the teachings of Kapila, Patanjali, Gautama, Kanabhoji, Jaimini, and Bauddha.

*tab koi nija-mate, bhukti, mukti yācato,
pāta-i nāmā-vidha phāṇḍ
so-sabu-vañcaka, tuwā bhakti bahir-mukha,
ghaṭāowe viṣama paramād*

They are all averse to Your devotional service! They are all cheaters. By presenting their own conclusions, they are offering *bhukti* (enjoyment) and *mukti* (liberation), but they are simply laying all kinds of traps and causing a dangerous confusion.

*vaimukha-vañcane, bhāṭa so-sabu,
niramilo vividha pasār
daṇḍavat dūrato, bhaktivinoda bhelo,*

They create different sorts of practices, but by so doing, they all serve the purpose of cheating the living entities by diverting their attention away from You. Accepting Your devotees' lotus feet as the essence, Bhaktivinod offers these counterfeits his obeisance from a distance.

(2)

*tuwā-bhakti-pratikūla dharma jā'te roy
parama jatane tāhā tyajibo niścoy*

Whatever is opposed to your devotional service, I shall certainly very carefully abandon it.

*tuwā-bhakti-bahir-mukha saṅga nā koribo
gaurāṅga-virodhi-jana-mukha nā heribo*

I will not associate with anyone whose consciousness is not centered on Your devotional service and whose thoughts dwell in the material realm. I will not look at the face of one who is antagonistic to Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.

*bhakti-pratikūla sthāne nā kori vasati
bhaktira apriya kārye nāhi kori rati*



I do not live in a place which is unfavourable to devotional service. I am not attached to doing any work that is disagreeable to devotional service.

*bhaktira virodhī grantha pāṭha nā koribo
bhaktira virodhī vyākhyā kabhu nā śunibo*

I will not read any scripture that is disagreeing with devotional service. I will never listen to explanations opposing devotional service.

*gaurāṅga-varjita sthāna tīrtha nāhi māni
bhaktira bādhaka jñāna-karma tuccha jāni*

I do not consider any locality a place of pilgrimage unless it is connected to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. I understand the processes of *jñāna* (endeavouring for accumulating knowledge, leading towards liberation) and *karma* (endeavouring to accumulate pious activities, leading towards material enjoyment) to be insignificant and insubstantial.

*bhaktira bādhaka kāle nā kori ādar
bhakti bahir-mukha nija-jane jāni par*

I do not give respect to time that is an obstacle to Your devotional service. I will consider even my own family members as not related to me if they are not Krishna

conscious.

*bhaktira bādhikā spṛhā koribo varjan
abhakta-pradatta anna nā kori grahan*

I will give up all desires that cause obstacles in devotional service. I do not accept any food offered to me by a non-devotee.

*jāhā kichu bhakti-pratikūla boli' jāni
tyajibo jatane tāhā, e niścoya vāni*

My firm maxim is to carefully give up any act of sacrifice that I know to be unfavourable to devotional service.

*bhaktivinoda poḍi' prabhura carane
māgaye śakati pratikūlyera varjane*

Falling at His Lord's (or spiritual master's) lotus feet Bhaktivinod begs for the strength to give up everything unfavourable to devotional service.

—From the book *Śaraṇāgati* by Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur • Translated by Vrajsevikā devī dasī ॐ

UNAUTHORIZED SAMPRADAYAS

Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur

What is the conception of mundane transcendentalists?

We meet many so-called *paṇḍitas* who think that they have understood *bhakti* by their knowledge and intelligence. Some conclude that devotional service mixed with *jñāna* is pure *bhakti*, and others conclude that devotional service mixed with *karma* is pure *bhakti*. They are so proud that if they hear the teachings of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, they say, “Everyone can make their own conclusion. What is the need to take the conclusion of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*?” These people never come in touch with *sad-dharma* because they have no desire to know it. The result of performing their own concocted process of devotional service is that they can never relish pure devotion. (*Tāt-tat-karma-pravārtana, Sajjana-toṣaṇī* 11/6)

Do the Mayavadis hear, chant, and offer prayers that are pleasing to Krishna?

Mayavadis consider the glories of devotional service, the object of worship, and the Lord's servants as temporary. Their hearing, chanting, serving, and offering prayers, therefore, are felt by Krishna as blows of thunderbolts. (A song from *Śaraṇāgati*)

Who are hypocrites?

Hypocrites are those who do not accept that devotional service is eternal, but they always display external signs of devotional service. Their goal is to accomplish some remote purpose. (*Caitanya-śikṣāmrta* 3/3)

What is the most harmful association in the world?

There is no worse association in the whole world than that of a *dharma-dhvaṅgi*. One should rather associate with sense enjoyers. Being deceitful, the *dharma-dhvaṅgis* take on the appearance of devotees with a desire to cheat everyone, and to fulfill their crooked desires, they cheat the foolish by helping them in their rascaldom. Some of the *dharma-dhvaṅgis* become *gurus* and others become disciples, and by trickery, they accumulate wealth, women, false prestige, and material assets. If one gives up the association of crooked hypocrites, one can honestly engage in devotional service. (*Sajjana-toṣaṇī* 10/11)

Is the endeavour of the sinful living entities against the system of *varṇāśrama* beneficial?

To preach religious principles without respecting the *varṇāśrama* system or the *saṁnyāsī*'s engaged in devotional service is extremely harmful. The endeavors against the *varṇāśrama* system by impersonalists, whimsical devotees, and various unauthorized *saṁpradāyas*, such as *neḍā*, *bāula*, *kartābhajā*, *daraveśa*, *kumbhapaṭi*, *ativāḍī*, are also extremely harmful. (*Caitanya-śikṣāmrta*)

Is the *bāula* philosophy similar to the Vaishnava philosophy?

The philosophies of the *bāulas*, *sāṁis*, *neḍās*, *daraveśas*, *kartābhajās*, and *ativāḍīs* are those of nondevotees. Their instructions and activities are most incoherent. Many people lose respect in Vaishnavism by discussing these philosophies. (*Prema-pradīpa Chapter 6*)

Was the *bāula* philosophy propounded by Sri Sanatana Goswami or Sri Viracandra Goswami?

The form in which the *bāula* philosophy is seen at present is totally opposed to the scriptures. There are two types of instructions on devotional service that are found in the *śāstras*: *vaidhī* and *rāgānugā*. The *bāulas* do not follow any limbs of *vaidhī-bhakti*; they engage in various improper activities on the pretext of *rāgānugā-bhakti*. It is very hard to say who started the *bāula* philosophy. Sometimes the *bāulas* claim Sri Sanatana Goswami and sometimes Sri Viracandra Goswami as their propounder. Actually neither Sri Sanatana

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Goswami nor Viracandra Goswami ever thought of the sinful path of the *bāulas*. (*Sajjana-toṣaṇī* 4/4)

Are the following terms right and prestigious for the Vaishnava religion: *Vaiṣṇava-vamśa* (Vaishnava dynasty), *Vaiṣṇava-jāti* (Vaishnava caste), and *Vaiṣṇava-ācārya-vamśa* (dynasty of the Vaishnava acharya)?

There cannot be a *Vaiṣṇava-vamśa*. There is no guarantee that every descendant of a particular dynasty will become a Vaishnava. We are seeing many rogues take birth in various Vaishnava families, and they are acting like demons. Whereas many great people have taken birth in the family of dog-eaters and Mohammedans, and have become Vaishnavas on the strength of pure devotional service. Many non-Vaishnavas are found in the families of Vaishnava *ācāryas*. On the other hand, many Vaishnavas have taken birth in the family of gross nondevotees. The prestige that is given to the caste Vaishnavas and descendants of Vaishnava *ācāryas* does not increase the glories of the Vaishnava religion; rather the audacity of non-Vaishnavism is increasing. (*Sajjana-toṣaṇī* 9/9)

How was the Vaishnava religion accepted during the time of Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura?

The age of Kali is so formidable that it does not allow pious activities to go on for long. When the three *ācāryas* (Sri Srinivasa Acharya, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, and Sri Narottama dasa Thakura) and their followers (such as Sri Govinda dasa) disappeared from this world, immediately the supreme religious principles began to vanish again. Gradually pure devotional service began to disappear from the land of Gauda. The descendants of the *ācārya* families began to act like official preachers of various religions, whether they were *vaiṣṇava*, *śāktas*, or *karma-kāṇḍīs*. As a result, the pure Vaishnava religion inaugurated by Sri Gauranga, Sri Nityananda, and Sri Advaita gradually disappeared from sight. On one side, the revolution of the *ācāryas* was going on, and on the other, disturbances created by *bāulas*, *sahajiyās*, and others gradually increased. That is why a pathetic condition of Vaishnava religion is found even today. (*Sajjana-toṣaṇī* 6/2)

Which persons tried to eliminate pure devotional service after the disappearance of Sriman Mahaprabhu?

After the disappearance of the transcendental pastimes of Sri Gaurangadeva, various unauthorized *saṁpradāyas* such as *bāula*, *kartābhajā*, and *sahajiyā* as well as the *smārta-brāhmaṇas* and impersonalists tried their best to pollute the Vaishnava religion on the

pretext of supporting it. Even today there is no lack of such people. Gradually the number of these classes of people is increasing. It is extremely unreasonable and nondevotional to say that Haridasa Thakura was a mercy *brāhmaṇa*, that Sri Ishvara Puri belonged to a *brāhmaṇa* or *śūdra* family, and that nobody except a *brāhmaṇa* is qualified to teach the philosophy of Vaishnavism. These activities have not enhanced devotional service and therefore they are not respected by the devotees. (*Sajjana-toṣaṇī* 11/10)

— Compiled from the writings of Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura, *Daśa-mūla-tattva*, Translated by Sarva-bhāvana dāsa

**THE PROCESS OF
ADVANCING IN KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS**
His Divine Grace
A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

The first point is that one must seek the association of persons who are Krishna conscious and who engage in devotional service. Without such association one cannot make advancement. Simply by theoretical knowledge or study one cannot make any appreciable advancement. One must give up the association of materialistic persons and seek the association of devotees because without the association of devotees one cannot understand the activities of the Lord.

Generally, people are convinced of the impersonal feature of the Absolute Truth. Because they do not associate with devotees, they cannot understand that the Absolute Truth can be a person and have personal activities. This is a very difficult subject matter, and unless one has personal understanding of the Absolute Truth, there is no meaning to devotion. Service or devotion cannot be offered to anything impersonal. Service must be offered to a person. Nondevotees cannot appreciate Krishna consciousness by reading the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or any other Vedic literature wherein the activities of the Lord are described; they think that these activities are fictional, manufactured stories because spiritual life is not explained to them in the proper mood. To understand the personal activities of the Lord, one has to seek the association of devotees, and by such association, when one contemplates and tries to understand the transcendental activities of the Lord, the path to liberation is open, and he is freed. One who has firm faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes fixed, and his attraction for association with the Lord and the devotees increases. Association with devotees means association with the Lord. The devotee who makes this association develops the consciousness for rendering service to the Lord, and then, being situated in the transcendental position of devotional service, he

gradually becomes perfect.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa)* » Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 25: The Glories of Devotional Service » Verses: 25-26

HOW TO ATTAIN DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami

Krishna is situated in everyone's heart as the *caitya-guru*, the spiritual master within. When He is kind to some fortunate conditioned soul, He personally gives him lessons so he can progress in devotional service, instructing the person as the Supersoul within and the spiritual master without.

*naivopayanty apacitiṁ kavayas taveśa
brahmāyusāpi kṛtam ṛddha-mudatḥ smarantaḥ
yo 'ntar bahis tanu-bhṛtām aśubhaṁ vidhunvann
ācārya-caitya-vapuṣā sva-gatiṁ vyanakti*

O my Lord! Transcendental poets and experts in spiritual science could not fully express their indebtedness to You, even if they were endowed with the prolonged lifetime of Brahma, for You appear in two features—externally as the *ācārya* and internally as the Supersoul—to deliver the embodied living being by directing him how to come to You. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.29.6)

By associating with a devotee, one awakens his faith in devotional service to Krishna. Because of devotional service, one's dormant love for Krishna awakens, and thus one's material, conditioned existence comes to an end.

*yadṛcchayā mat-kathādanu
jāta-śraddhas tu yaḥ pumān
na nirvinṇo nāti-sakto
bhakti-yogo 'sya siddhi-datḥ*

Somehow or other, if one is attracted to talks about Me and has faith in the instructions I have set forth in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and if one is neither falsely detached from material things nor very much attracted to material existence, his dormant love for Me will be awakened by devotional service. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.20.8)

Unless one is favored by a pure devotee, one cannot attain the platform of devotional service. To say nothing of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, one cannot even be relieved from the bondage of material existence.

*rahūgaṇaitat tapasā na yāti
na cejyayā nirvapaṇād grhād vā
na cchandasā naiva jalāgni-sūryair
vinā mahat-pāda-rajo-bhīṣekam*

O King Rahugana, without taking upon one's head the dust from the lotus feet of a pure devotee [a *mahājana* or *mahātmā*], one cannot attain devotional service. Devotional service is not possible to attain simply by undergoing severe austerities and penances, by gorgeously worshiping the Deity, or by strictly following the rules and regulations of the *saṁnyāsa* or *grhastha* order; nor is it attained by studying the Vedas, submerging oneself in water, or exposing oneself to fire or scorching sunlight. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.12.12)

Unless human society accepts the dust of the lotus feet of great *mahātmās*—devotees who have nothing to do with material possessions—mankind cannot turn its attention to the lotus feet of Krishna. Those lotus feet vanquish all the unwanted, miserable conditions of material life. The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.

The value of a moment's association with a devotee of the Lord cannot be compared even to the attainment of the heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which is for those who are meant for death.

The root cause of devotional service to Lord Krishna is association with advanced devotees. Even when one's dormant love for Krishna awakens, association with devotees is still most essential. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.51.53) Sri Mucukunda says:

*bhavāpavargo bhramato yadā bhavej
janasya tarhy acyuta sat-samāgamah
sat-saṅgamo yarhi tadaiva sad-gatau
parāvareṣe tvayi jāyate matiḥ*

O my Lord! O infallible Supreme Person! When a person wandering throughout the universes becomes eligible for liberation from material existence, he gets an opportunity to associate with devotees. When he associates with devotees, his attraction for You is awakened. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the highest goal of the topmost devotees, and the Lord of the universe.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.25.25) Lord Kapila says:

*satāṁ prasāṅgān mama vīrya-saṁvido
bhavanti hṛt-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ kathāḥ
taj-joṣaṇād āśv apavarga-vartmani
śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati*

The spiritually powerful message of Godhead can be properly discussed only in a society of devotees, and it

is greatly pleasing to hear in that association. If one hears from devotees, the way of transcendental experience quickly opens, and gradually one attains firm faith that in due course develops into attraction and devotion.'

A Vaishnava should always avoid the association of ordinary people. Common people are very much materially attached, especially to women. Vaishnavas should also avoid the company of those who are not devotees of Lord Krishna. By association with worldly people, one becomes devoid of truthfulness, cleanliness, mercy, gravity, spiritual intelligence, shyness, austerity, fame, forgiveness, control of the mind, control of the senses, fortune and all opportunities. One should not at any time associate with a coarse fool who is bereft of the knowledge of self-realization and who is no more than a toy animal in the hands of a woman. The illusion and bondage that accrue to a man from attachment to any other object are not as complete as that resulting from association with a woman or with men too much attached to women. It is better to accept the miseries of being encaged within bars and surrounded by burning flames than to associate with those bereft of Krishna consciousness. Such association is a very great hardship.'

One should not even see those who are bereft of devotional service in Krishna consciousness and who are therefore devoid of pious activities. Without hesitation, one should take exclusive shelter of Lord Krishna with full confidence, giving up bad association and even neglecting the regulative principles of the four *varṇas* and four *āśramas*. That is to say, one should abandon all material attachment.

— Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta » Madhya-līlā » Chapter 22: The Process of Devotional Service » Verses: 47 - 60 & 82-93



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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Śrī Bhaimī Ekādaśī

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SWEET PASTIMES OF LORD NITYANANDA



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His Divine Grace

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SRIVASA, SACHIMATA AND LORD NITYANANDA

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BRAHMANA AND LORD NITYANANDA

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PRAYERS AT THE LOTUS FEET OF LORD NITYANANDA

Srila Bhaktivinod Thakura

SWEET PASTIMES OF LORD NITYANANDA

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura

AKRODHA PARAMĀNANDA

Supreme Bliss and Freedom from Anger

Sri Locana Dasa Thakura



WHY DO WE WORSHIP SRI SRI GAUR NITAI?

His Divine Grace

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

*caitanya-nityānande nāhi e-saba vicāra
nāma laite prema dena, vahe aśrudhāra*

TRANSLATION

If one only chants, with some slight faith, the holy names of Lord Chaitanya and Nityananda, very quickly he is cleansed of all offenses. Thus as soon as he chants the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*, he feels the ecstasy of love for God.

PURPORT

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura remarks in this connection that if one takes shelter of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda, follows Their instructions to become more tolerant than the tree and humbler than the grass, and in this way chants the holy name of the Lord, very soon he achieves the platform of transcendental loving service to the Lord, and tears appear in his eyes. There are offenses to be considered in chanting the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*, but there are no such considerations in chanting the names of Gaura-Nityananda. Therefore, if one chants the Hare

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

Krishna *mahā-mantra* but his life is still full of sinful activities, it will be very difficult for him to achieve the platform of loving service to the Lord. But if in spite of being an offender one chants the holy names of Gaura-Nityananda, he is very quickly freed from the reactions to his offenses. Therefore, one should first approach Lord Chaitanya and Nityananda, or worship Guru-Gauranga, and then come to the stage of worshipping Radha-Krishna. In our Krishna consciousness movement, our students are first advised to worship Guru-Gauranga, and then, when they are somewhat advanced, the Radha-Krishna Deity is installed, and they are engaged in the worship of the Lord.

One should first take shelter of Gaura-Nityananda in order to reach, ultimately, Radha-Krishna. Srila Narottamadasa Thakura sings in this connection:

*gaurāṅga balite ha'be pulaka śarīra
hari hari balite nayaneba'benīra
ārakabe nitāi-cāndera karuṇā ha-ibe
saṁsāra-vāsanā mora kabe tuccha habe
viṣaya chāḍiyā kabe śuddha habe mana
kabe hāma heraba śrī-vṛndāvana*

In the beginning one should very regularly chant Sri Gaurasundara's holy name and then chant the holy name of Lord Nityananda. Thus one's heart will be cleansed of impure desires for material enjoyment. Then one can approach Vrindavana-dhama to worship Lord Krishna. Unless one is favored by Lord Chaitanya and Nityananda, there is no need to go to Vrindavana, for unless one's mind is purified, he cannot see Vrindavana, even if he goes there. Actually going to Vrindavana involves taking shelter of the Six Gosvamis by reading the *Bhakti-rasamṛta-sindhu*, *Vidagdha-mādhava*, *Lalita-mādhava* and the other books that they have given. In this way one can understand the transcendental loving affairs between Radha and Krishna. *Kabe hāma bujhaba se yugala-pīṛī*. The conjugal love between Radha and Krishna is not an ordinary human affair; it is fully transcendental. In order to understand Radha and Krishna, worship Them and engage in Their loving service, one must be guided by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu and the Six Gosvamis, Lord Chaitanya's direct disciples.

For an ordinary man, worship of Sri Chaitanya and Nityananda Prabhu or the Pancha-tattva is easier than worship of Radha and Krishna. Unless one is very fortunate, he should not be induced to worship Radha-Krishna directly. A neophyte student who is not sufficiently educated or enlightened should not

indulge in the worship of Sri Radha and Krishna or the chanting of the Hare Krishna *mantra*. Even if he does so, he cannot get the desired result. One should therefore chant the names of Nitai-Gaura and worship Them without false prestige. Since everyone within this material world is more or less influenced by sinful activities, in the beginning it is essential that one take to the worship of Guru-Gauranga and ask their favor, for thus despite all his disqualifications one will very soon become qualified to worship the Radha-Krishna vighraha.

It should be noted in this connection that the holy names of Lord Krishna and Gaurasundara are both identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore one should not consider one name to be more potent than the other. Considering the position of the people of this age, however, the chanting of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's name is more essential than the chanting of the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* because Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is the most magnanimous incarnation and His mercy is very easily achieved. Therefore one must first take shelter of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu by chanting *śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu-nityānanda śrī-advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vrnda*. By serving Gaura-Nityananda one is freed from the entanglements of material existence and thus becomes qualified to worship the Radha-Krishna Deity.

—*Caitanya-caritāmṛta* » *Ādi-līlā* » Chapter 8 : The Author Receives the Orders of Kṛṣṇa and Guru » Verse:31 » Purport by His Divine Grace A.C.Bhaktivedānta Swami Srīla Prabhupada. ॐ

SRIVASA, SACHIMATA AND LORD NITYANANDA

Srila Vrindavan Das Thakura

Sri Gauranga Raya constantly enjoyed various pastimes with Nityananda Prabhu in Navadvipa. All the devotees accompanied Advaita Prabhu in jubilant dancing and loud chanting of the names of Krishna. Nityananda continued to reside in the house of Srivasa Pandita. He was constantly in the mood of a child and did not manifest any other mood. He would not eat rice with His own hands, so Malini fed Him like her own son. The chaste Malini knew well the glories of Nityananda Prabhu, therefore she served Him as a mother serves her son. One day the Lord was sitting and discussing topics of Krishna with Srivasa.

In order to test Srivasa, Lord Vishvambhara said, "Why are you letting this *avadhūta* stay in your home? I know you are very magnanimous, but we do not know which caste and which family He belongs to. If you want to protect your own caste and family, then you should immediately get rid of this *avadhūta*."

Srivasa Pandita smiled and said, "O Lord, it is not proper for You to test me. If anyone worships You for a day, he is my life and soul. Nityananda Prabhu is Your body, and I am the witness of this fact. Even if Nityananda Prabhu holds a pot of wine, associates with *yavani* (meat-eating woman), and spoils my caste, life, and wealth, still my faith will not waver. This is a fact I am telling You."

When the Lord heard this from the mouth of Srivasa, He got up, roared loudly, and embraced him to His chest. "O Pandita Srivasa, what did you say? You have so much faith in Nityananda Prabhu? You have understood My confidential associate Nityananda Prabhu. Therefore I am most pleased with you and desire to give you a benediction. Even if Lakshmi, the goddess of fortune, begs alms from door to door, you will never be afflicted with poverty. Everyone in your house, including the dogs and cats, will have unflinching devotion for Me. I am offering Nityananda Prabhu to you. Please take care of Him in all respects. After giving this benediction to Srivasa, the Lord returned home."

Nityananda Prabhu continued to wander throughout Nadia. Sometimes He swam in the Ganges, and sometimes He happily floated in the current. Sometimes He played with the boys, and sometimes He went to the houses of Gangadasa and Murari. Sometimes He rushed to the Lord's house, where mother Sachi showered Him with affection. In the mood of a child, Nityananda Prabhu tried to catch hold of mother Sachi's feet, but she would run away.

One day mother Sachi had a dream, which she narrated to her son Vishvambhara in a solitary place. "Early this morning I had a dream in which I saw You and Nityananda Prabhu. Both of You appeared like five-year-old boys. You were quarreling together and chasing each other. In this way You both entered the Deity room and came out holding Krishna and Balarama in Your hands. He had Krishna in His hands, and You had Balarama. Then I clearly saw all four of You quarreling together. The Deities of Krishna and Balarama angrily said, "Who are You imposters? Get out of here. This house, these rooms, this *sandēśa*, this yogurt, and this milk all belong to Us."

Nityananda Prabhu said, "Those days when You stole yogurt and butter to eat are gone. The days of the cowherd boys are over. Now the *brāhmaṇas* have taken charge. Recognize Us and allow Us to enjoy all the offerings. If You do not voluntarily allow Us to eat, then You will be beaten. Moreover, if We forcibly eat, who can stop Us?"

Rama and Krishna then said, "It will not be Our fault if We bind You imposters here today."

Then Lord Balarama threatened Nityananda Prabhu,

“In the name of Krishna, You better not misbehave today.”

Nityananda Prabhu replied, “I am not afraid of Your Krishna, for My Lord is Gaurachandra Vishvambhara.”

“In this way all four of You quarreled and forcibly ate each others' food. Someone grabbed another's food and ate, and someone ate the food from another's mouth with His own mouth. Then Nityananda Prabhu called me and said, O mother, please give Me some rice. I am hungry.

“When Nityananda Prabhu said this to me, I woke up. But I could not understand anything, so I am relating this to You.”

After hearing the topics of her dream, Lord Vishvambhara laughed and spoke to His mother in sweet words. “O mother, you have certainly seen a most auspicious dream. Please do not disclose this to anyone. The Deities of our house are full of life, and your dream has firmly established this fact in My heart. I often see that half of the foods that I offer vanish. Feeling shy, I don't tell anyone about this. I had some doubt about your daughter-in-law, but today that doubt has been removed. Vishnupriya-devi, the mother of the universe, smiled on hearing the words of her husband. She had heard the entire narration of the dream from within another room. Vishvambhara said, “O mother, please hear My words. Let us immediately call Nityananda Prabhu here to feed Him.” Mother Sachi was pleased to hear these words of her son and began gathering the ingredients for lunch.

*nityānanda sthāne gelā prabhu viśvambhara
nīmantraṇa giyā tāne karilā satvara
āmāra bāḍite āji gosāñira bhikṣā
cañcalatā nā karibā” karāilāśikṣā
karṇa dhari' nityānanda `viṣṇu' `viṣṇu' bale
“cañcalatā kare yata pāgala-sakale
ye bujhiye more tumi vāsaha cañcala
āpanāra mata tumi dekhaha sakala”
eta bale' dui-jane hāsīte hāsīte
kṛṣṇa-kathā kahi' kahi' āilā bāḍite*

Lord Vishvambhara quickly went to Nityananda Prabhu's residence and invited Him for lunch. “O Gosani, today You should take lunch at our house. But I tell You before hand, do not create any mischief.” Nityananda Prabhu held His ears and said, “Vishnu, Vishnu. Only madmen create mischief. I think You consider Me a mischief monger because You think everyone is like Yourself.” Speaking in this way, They both began to laugh. They then proceeded to the Lord's house while discussing topics of Krishna on the

way.

They both smiled as They sat outside together, accompanied by Their intimate associates like Gadadhara. Ishana gave them water to wash their feet. Then the Lord and Nityananda went to eat lunch.

The mood in which the two Lords sat eating together resembled that of Sri Rama and Lakshmana at the house of Kaushalya. In this way the two Lords ate Their lunch in the same mood, with the same affection, as the same persons.

As mother Sachi happily served Them, she set out three plates by mistake and They both began to laugh. When she returned to serve Them more, she directly saw Them as five-year-old boys. She saw two enchanting boys, one with a whitish complexion and the other was blackish. Both had four arms, and both were naked. She saw They had the conch, disc, club, lotus, plow, muṣala, the mark of *Śrīvatsa*, the Kaustubha gem, and Their ears were decorated with shark-shaped earrings. She saw her daughter-in-law on the chest of her son.

Then suddenly the whole scene disappeared. She fell to the ground unconscious and all her clothes became wet with tears. Rice was scattered throughout the entire room. On seeing that wonderful sight, Sachi forgot herself.

Mahaprabhu hurriedly washed His hands and picked up His mother. “O mother, please get up. Calm yourself. Why did you suddenly fall to the ground?” On regaining her consciousness, mother Sachi quickly tied her hair. She did not say anything as she wept inside one of the rooms. She breathed heavily and her entire body trembled. She was filled with ecstasy and nothing else came to her mind.

— *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, *Madhya-khaṇḍa*, Chapter Eight: The Manifestation of Opulences » Verses: 04-072

BRAHMANA AND LORD NITYANANDA

Srila Narahari Cakravartī Ṭhākura

There was a rich brahmana everyone knew who lived near Govardhana. He was always overwhelmed in love for Balarama, and his mind was always absorbed in thoughts of His character. He was certain that one day Baladeva would kindly grant him darshan and for that reason he always wandered around Govardhana. One cannot describe the fortune of that brahmana who one day received information that Baladeva would grant him darshan. In order to fulfill this devotee's desire, Nityananda Rama at that time went to Govardhana on pilgrimage. Nityananda remained in a solitary place, but whoever saw Him was bewildered by His celestial



body, which bewilders even Cupid.

When that brahmana saw Nityananda Prabhu in the distance, he wondered where had this wonderful person come from. Seeing the Lord's effulgence, he could understand that the Lord was not an ordinary person. The brahmana brought various items like yogurt, milk, cheese, and butter. He came before Nityananda, offered obeisances, and said, "O *mahātmā*, please accept these gifts. I pray that you please show Your mercy to me so I may have darshan of Rohini-nandana."

Hearing these words, Nityananda smiled and in great fun accepted the offerings made by the brahmana. The brahmana then received the Lord's remnants and returned to his own place, where he honored the *mahā-prasāda* and became agitated in love.

The brahmana was unable to return to meet Nityananda, and as evening arrived he fell asleep. At night, Lord Nityananda appeared to that fortunate brahmana in a dream. Seeing Him, the brahmana was very pleased. The next moment Lord Nityananda revealed His form as Baladeva, and the brahmana fell at His feet.

What a wonderful form He exhibited—enchancing to the entire world! His limbs were glittering, being decorated with various ornaments. After blessing the brahmana, the Lord disappeared. On the Lord's disappearance, the brahmana's sleep broke. He became restless and started to return to where he had met Nityananda Prabhu. At that moment he heard a voice telling him to remain patient and wait till the morning. He considered that his desire was at last fulfilled. "Now I have achieved the Lord, I will not leave Him. I will fall down and surrender everything at His feet. When the night is over I will have a goldsmith make ornaments to

offer to the Lord." As he thought in this way sleep again came.

"Again in the brahmana's dream Lord Nityananda appeared to him. Seeing the Lord decorated in wonderful ornaments, that best of the brahmanas offered many prayers. As before, upon the disappearance of the Lord, the brahmana's sleep broke.

Morning soon came and the brahmana came before Nityananda Prabhu and explained the previous night's dream. The Lord smiled slightly and holding the brahmana's hand instructed the brahmana in all truths. The brahmana inquired from the Lord, "Who has made those ornaments I saw in my dream?" The Lord, who is controlled by His devotees' desires, replied, "One day I will be decorated as you have seen. For now take this govardhana *śilā* and cover it in gold. I will then wear it on My neck."

The brahmana executed the order as given by the Lord. The best of the *avadhūtas* then took the *śilā* and wore it on His neck. Even for Lord Brahma, such pastimes are very rare. Nityananda forbid the brahmana to disclose this incident to anyone. However, out of His affection to His devotee, the Lord remained there for some days. This rare affection can be had by simply seeing this place.

— From *Sri Bhakti-ratnākara* by Śrīla Narahari Cakravartī Ṭhākura,
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PRAYERS AT THE LOTUS FEET OF LORD NITYANANDA Śrīla Bhaktivinoḍ Thākura

*bastutaḥ sakali tava, jīva keho noy
'aḥam'-'mama'-bhrame bhromi' bhoge śoka-bhoy*

In truth, all things belong to You; no *jīva* is ever the owner of anything. The tiny soul wanders in this world mistakenly thinking in terms of *aḥam* (I am this material body and mind), and *mama* (everything related to this body is mine). Thus he suffers the consequences of both sorrow and fear.

*aḥam-mama-abhimāna ei-mātro dhan
baddha-jīva nija boli' jāne mane man*

The conditioned soul thinks that all the things related to the false conceptions of "I" and "mine" are his exclusive treasures. Calling them his own, his mind is firmly convinced of this gross delusion.

*sei abhimāne āmi saṁsāre poḍiyā
hābuḍubu khāi bhava-sindhu sātāriyā*

Due to such vanity, I also fell into this material world. Floundering in the ocean of mundane existence like a drowning man, I suffer the pangs of rising and sinking in that ocean.

*tomāra abhoya-pade loiyā śaraṇ
āji āmi korilāma ātma-nivedan*

I take shelter at Your lotus feet, which deliver one from fear, and dedicate the whole of myself to You on this day.

*'aharī'-'mama'-abhimāna chāḍilo āmāy
ār jeno mama hṛde stāna nāhi pāy*

The false conception of thinking in terms of "I" and "mine" has left me now. May it never again find a place to settle within my heart.

*ei mātṛo bala prabhu! dibe he āmāre
ahanitā-mamatā dūre pāri rākhibāre*

Please give me this strength alone, O Lord, that I may be able to keep the false conceptions of "I" and "mine" far away.

*ātma-nivedana-bhāva hṛde dṛḍha roy
hasti-snāna sama jeno khanika nā hoy*

May the mood of self-surrender to You remain firmly fixed in my heart and not prove to be momentary like the cleanliness of an elephant after a bath.

*bhaktivinoda prabhu nityānanda pāy
māge parasāda, jāhe abhimāna jāy*

Bhaktivinoda begs at the lotus feet of Lord Nityananda for that grace which causes all illusory concepts of false pride to flee.

—From the book *Śaraṇāgati » Second Principle of Surrender: Ātma-Nivedana* : by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura originally published in 1893, translation by Daśaratha-suta dāsa

SWEET PASTIMES OF LORD NITYANANDA *Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura*

One day in Nilachala, Sri Mahaprabhu called Nityananda Prabhu to a solitary place, and while discussing with Him about the preaching of pure



devotional service in Bengal, the Lord sent Nityananda Prabhu along with His associates to Bengal to fulfill His mission there. During their journey to Bengal the eternally perfect Vraja associates of Sri Baladeva Nityananda manifested their self-evident sentiments of Vraja. Sri Nityananda Prabhu went to the house of Raghava Pandita in Panihati, where Nityananda Prabhu heard a kirtana performed by the expert kirtana leader Madhava Ghosa and became absorbed in wonderful ecstatic love. As Sri Nityananda Prabhu climbed on the throne of Lord Vishnu, the devotees headed by Raghava Pandita performed the Lord's abhiseka ceremony. When Nityananda Prabhu ordered Raghava Pandita to quickly bring a garland of kadamba flowers, Raghava Pandita saw that by the will of Sri Nityananda many *kadamba* flowers had blossomed out of season in the lime tree situated in his courtyard. Raghava Pandita prepared a

garland from those *kadamba* flowers and offered it to Nityananda. Shortly thereafter, the ten directions were suddenly filled with the aroma of *damanaka* (*Artemisia indica*) flowers, and Nityananda explained that Sri Gaurasundara had put on a garland of *damanaka* flowers and come from Nilacala to hear the kirtana. Then Nityananda and His associates all manifested transformations of ecstatic love. Sri Nityananda stayed in Panihati for three months and exhibited various pastimes of devotional service. Lord Nityananda Prabhu used to decorate His body with various ornaments. Along with His associates, Nityananda visited the houses of the devotees situated on both sides of the Ganges. The children were showered with His mercy.

One day Sri Nityananda went to the house of Sri Gadadhara dasa. In the course of this narration there is a description of Sri Gadadhara Dasa's eternal mood as a gopi. Sri Nityananda took the Bala-gopala Deity from Sri Dasa Gadadhara Prabhu's temple and embraced put Him to His chest. When Sri Nityananda heard Sri Madhavananda's song describing the *dama-khanda-lila*, the pastimes of taking taxes, symptoms of ecstatic love manifested in His body.

In Gadadhara Dasa's village lived one Kazi, who was very envious, cruel, and opposed to kirtana. One day while intoxicated by love of God, Dasa Gadadhara Prabhu fearlessly went at night to the house of the Kazi while chanting the name of Hari and said, "Where is that fellow Kazi? He better chant the name of Krishna quickly, or I will break his head." When the Kazi came before Dasa Gadadhara and asked why he was coming to the house of an atheist like him, Dasa Gadadhara replied, "During the incarnation of Sri Chaitanya and Nityananda everyone in the world has chanted the name of Krishna, only you have remained aloof. I have come to make you chant the name of Hari." The Kazi replied, "Gadadhara, you go home today, I will chant the name of Hari tomorrow." On hearing the Kazi say the name Hari, Gadadhara said, "Why tomorrow? You have already chanted the name of Hari. Since you have uttered the name of Hari, all your inauspiciousness has been immediately vanquished." After speaking these words, Gadadhara clapped his hands and danced wildly intoxicated with ecstasy. After some time Gadadhara returned to his house. Nityananda always resided in his body.

Thereafter Nityananda with His associates departed for Navadvipa to see mother Sachi, and on the way they stayed at Purandara Pandita's temple in Khadadaha. While describing at this point the most wonderful transformations of loving devotional service manifested by Sri Chaitanya's servant Murari Pandita. After spending a few days at Khadadaha, Sri Nityananda and His

associates went to the village of Saptagrama and took bath there at the Triveni bathing ghata on the banks of the Ganges. He stayed on the bank at the Triveni in the house of Uddharana Datta, and He inspired the entire mercantile community to worship Krishna by preaching the holy names of Krishna from door to door. Even godless Yavanas took shelter at the lotus feet of Sri Nityananda, the deliverer of the fallen souls.

After some time Sri Nityananda came to Sri Advaita's house in Shantipura. Sri Advaita Acharya offered prayers to Nityananda Prabhu, and then the two spent the entire day in great ecstasy discussing topics of Krishna. From Shantipura, Sri Nityananda Prabhu went to Navadvipa and went straight to Sridhama Mayapur to meet mother Sachi. Sri Nityananda and His associates enjoyed ecstatic kirtana pastimes in Navadvipa and enacted pastimes of delivering the fallen souls.

In Navadvipa there was a particular young brahmana, who was the leader of the dacoits. That leader of dacoits saw the opulent ornaments on the body of Sri Nityananda and desired to steal them. Thinking in this way, he began to travel with Nityananda with a desire to steal His ornaments. Realizing that Sri Nityananda was living alone at the house of Hiranya Pandita, that leader of dacoits along with his fellow dacoits waited at night fully prepared in a solitary place near the house of Hiranya Pandita. They began to contemplate who would take which ornament of Nityananda. But by the will of Sri Nityananda, the dacoits soon fell asleep. When they woke early the next morning to the sound of the crows, they hastily hid their weapons at some place and returned to their respective home while blaming each other.

On the next night the dacoits first worshiped goddess Chandi with great pomp by offering her wine and flesh, and after collecting various weapons and wearing *kavacas*, or protective amulets, they surrounded the house of Nityananda at the dead of night. But contrary to their expectations they found innumerable, fully prepared, fierce-looking soldiers who were constantly chanting the name of Hari were guarding the house of Nityananda. They became greatly astonished to see this and after making various arguments among themselves they concluded that there is no hope of their success on that particular night and left.

When on the third night the dacoits entered into the residence of Sri Nityananda, they immediately lost their sight and started falling into filthy pits and thorny bushes. At that moment Lord Indra began to shower heavy rain and storm there by making the lives of the dacoits miserable. After this incident the leader of the dacoits had a change of heart, so he took shelter at the lotus feet of Nityananda and prayed for his own

deliverance while offering prayers to Nityananda. Sri Nityananda bestowed mercy on the leader of the dacoits by forbidding him to again engage in sinful activities while misusing his independence. Moreover, Sri Nityananda delivered other dacoits through this leader of the dacoits.

— From the chapter summaries to Sri Chaitanya Bhagavata by Srila Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Translated by Bhumiṇipatī Dāsa Edited and Published by Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi dāsa, Vrajraj Press

AKRODHA PARAMĀNANDA

Supreme Bliss and Freedom from Anger
Sri Locana Dasa Thākura

*akrodha paramānanda nityānanda rāy
abhimāna śūnya nitāi nagare beḍāya*

Lord Nityananda is the supreme bliss and free from anger. This Nitai strolls about the town being completely free of pride or any identification with the body.

*adhama patita jīvera dvāre dvāre gīyā
hari-nāma mahā-mantra dicchena bilāyā*

Going from door to door (of the houses) of the lowest fallen souls, distributing the harinama mahā-mantra in charity, He tells to whomever He meets with straw in His mouth: "I will become your slave, if you just worship Gaura-Hari (the fair-complexioned Lord Krishna)."

*jāre dekhe tare kahe dante tṛṇa dhari
āmāre kinīyā laha bala gaura-hari*

*o bhāi re tādera pāye dhori
mādhāi re tor pāye boli
bolo re ek-bār hari hari
bhāi mādhāi re tor pāye boli
bolo re ek-bār gaura hari
bhāi mādhāi re tor pāye boli
o tui bolo re ek-bār gaura hari
bhavopari tore jābi
o tui bolo re ek-bār hari hari
bhavopari jābi tore
o tui bolo re ek-bār hari hari
bhavopari tore jābi*

"O my brother! Ah! I am holding your feet. Oh Madhai! My humble request at your feet is that you please just

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

once say 'Hari! 'Hari! Brother Madhai! O, my humble request at your feet, 'O, please just one time say Gaura! Hari! Brother Madhai, my humble request at your feet, O please, Ah, just once say Gaura Hari! You will reach the state beyond birth and death. O, please, Ah! Just one time say Hari Hari! You will go beyond birth and death! O, please just once say Hari Hari! You will go out of this cycle of birth and death."

*eto boli' nityānanda bhūme gaḍi jāy
sonāra parvata jeno dhūlāte loṭāy*

*dhūlāte loṭāy, dhūlāte loṭāy
sonāra parvata jeno dhūlāte loṭāy
sonāra parvata jeno dhūlāte loṭāy
sonāra parvata jeno gaura hari hari bole
sonāra parvata jeno dhūlāte loṭāy
gaura hari hari bole dhūlāte loṭāy*

Speaking thus Lord Nityananda rolls on the ground. Like a mountain of gold, He rolls in the dust. He rolls in the dust, rolls in the dust. Like a golden mountain He rolls in the dust. Like a golden mountain He rolls in the dust. Looking like a golden mountain He says "Gaura! Hari! Hari!", and rolls in the dust.

*heno avatāre jārrati nā janmilo
locan bole sei pāpī elo ār gelo*

Locan Das says, he who does not have any affection for such an incarnation is sinful and he comes and goes, (continuing his material existence, taking birth and dying again and again).

— From Chaitanya Maṅgala by Sri Lochan Das Thākura • Translated by Vrajasevika Devi Dasi.

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

Nityam Bhagavata-sevaya

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Śrī Vijaya Ekādaśī

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Lord Kapila's Teachings - Part 2

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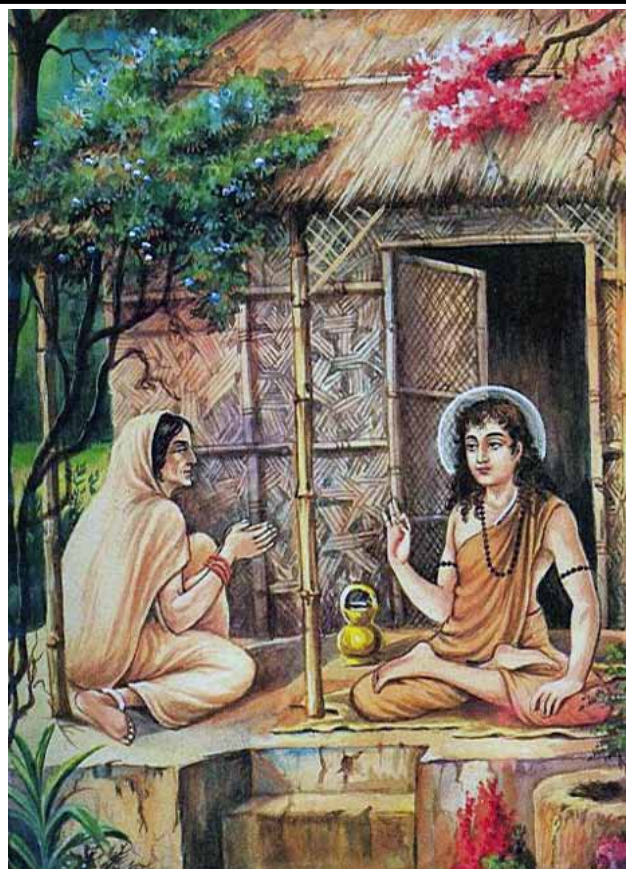
MATERIAL LIFE

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RENUNCIATION OF CONDUCT UNFAVORABLE TO PURE DEVOTION

Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur





WHAT IS SĀṆKHYA PHILOSOPHY?

His Divine Grace

A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Bhakti-yoga, devotional service, is the basic principle of all systems of philosophy; all philosophy which does not aim for devotional service to the Lord is considered merely mental speculation. But of course *bhakti-yoga* with no philosophical basis is more or less sentimental.

There are two classes of men. Some consider themselves intellectually advanced and simply speculate and meditate, and others are sentimental and have no philosophical basis for their propositions. Neither of these can achieve the highest goal of life; or if they do, it will take them very many years.

Vedic literature therefore suggests that there are three elements—namely the Supreme Lord, the living entity and their eternal relationship. The goal of life is to follow the principles of *bhakti*, or devotional service, and ultimately attain the planet of the Supreme Lord having developed full devotional love for Him as His eternal servitor.

It is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* that one can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, only through devotional service (*bhaktiyā māṁ abhijānāti* [Bg. 18.55]). It is also stated in *Srīmad Bhāgavatam* that Krishna is the object of devotional service. Similarly, according to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, to understand Krishna means to understand Krishna in His personal form with His internal energy, His external energy, His expansions and His incarnations.

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

In other words, Krishna, the object of devotion, is understood fully only through devotional service.

It is explained in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18:55) *Tato māṁ tattvato jñātvā*, by understanding the Lord and His diverse aspects, one can become eligible to enter into His kingdom.

There are many diverse systems of knowledge for understanding Krishna. One of them, *sāṅkhya* by name, is intended especially for persons who are conditioned by this material world. *Sāṅkhya* philosophy is understood by disciplic succession as the science of devotional service. Preliminary study of devotional service have already been explained previously. Here, the analytical study of devotional service by which one becomes freed from the modes of material nature, will be explained by the Lord

Sāṅkhya philosophy is the analytical study of all categories of existence. The understanding of all these categories by examining their nature and characteristics is called acquirement of knowledge. It is fruitless labour to simply acquire knowledge without reaching the goal of life. If we do not take up *bhakti-yoga* and simply absorb ourselves in the analytical study of the nature of things as they are, then the result will be practically nil. It is stated in *Srīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.14.4) that such engagement is like husking paddy. There is no use beating the husk if the grain has already been removed. By the scientific study of material nature, the living entity and the Supersoul, one is expected to understand the basic principle of devotional service to the Lord.

By understanding the science of devotional service as explained in *Sāṅkhya* philosophy, one can become free from the modes of material nature. The eternal self, after becoming freed from the spell of material nature, becomes eligible to enter into the kingdom of God. When someone is not freed from the modes of material nature, he harbours desire for personal sense gratification or to lord it over material nature. Therefore, one has to become free by understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead analytically, as explained by Lord Kapiladeva in His *sāṅkhya* system.

—*Srīmad Bhāgavatam* (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo
» Chapter 29: Explanation of Devotional Service by Lord Kapila » Verse: 2
& Chapter 26: Fundamental Principles of Material Nature » Verse: 1. 🌸

FURTHER INQUIRIES BY MOTHER DEVAHUTI

Sri Maitreya Ṛṣi

Devahuti said, “My dear son, I am, after all, a woman, and so it is very difficult for me to understand the Absolute Truth due to possessing lesser intelligence.

But, if You kindly explain to me how I can engage in devotional service in such a way that I can easily attain Your lotus feet, then I will surely understand it.”

Being born from her body, Lord Kapila was already compassionate toward Devahuti, and after hearing this statement, He became even more so. The Lord then described the *Sāṅkhya* system of philosophy, which is a combination of devotional service and mystic realization. The culmination of this process is given as follows.

The process of meditation

When the mind is perfectly purified by the practice of yoga, one should concentrate on the tip of his nose with half-closed eyes and see the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead within. The Lord has a cheerful, lotus-like countenance, which is adorned with reddish eyes. He wears shining yellow cloth, on His chest is the curl of white hair known as *śrīvatsa*, and around His neck hangs the brilliant *kaustubha* gem. Also around His neck is a garland of forest flowers, surrounded by humming bees, and He is further adorned with a pearl necklace, crown, and pairs of armlets, bracelets and anklets.

While standing upon the lotus of the devotee's heart, the Lord is most charming to look at, and His serene demeanor gladdens the eyes and souls of all who are fortunate enough to behold Him. He is ever-youthful and always eager to bestow His blessings upon His devotees.

While fixing his mind upon the Lord's eternal form, the yogi should not see His body in its entirety, but should view each individual limb separately. The devotee should first concentrate his mind upon the Lord's lotus feet, which are adorned with the marks of a thunderbolt, goad, banner, and lotus. The Lord's lotus feet, with their splendorous ruby nails, act like thunderbolts that shatter the mountain of sin stored in the mind of the meditating devotee. For this reason, one should concentrate his mind upon the Lotus feet of the Lord for a long time.

The yogi should then meditate upon the activities of Lakshmi, the goddess of fortune, who is always very carefully massaging the Lord's legs and thighs. Next, the devotee should meditate upon the Lord's thigh, which are the storehouse of all energies. Then, he should contemplate the Lord's rounded hips, which are encircled by a nice sash.

The yogi should thereafter meditate upon the Lord's moonlike navel, from which the entire universe has sprung. Next, the yogi should concentrate his mind upon the Lord's nipples, which resemble a pair of exquisite emeralds. Then, he should concentrate upon the Lord's chest, which is the abode of the



goddess Maha-Lakshmi, and which is the source of all transcendental pleasure for the mind and eyes.

Thereafter, the devotee should fix his mind upon the Lord's neck, which enhances the beauty of the *kaustubha* gem that hangs down to His chest. The yogi can then meditate upon the Lord's four arms, which are the source of all powers by which the demigods control the various functions of material nature. Next, the yogi can contemplate the Lord's ornaments, which were polished by Mount Mandara as it revolved during the churning of the Milk Ocean.

The devotee should then contemplate the *sudarśana cakra*, which has one thousand spokes and is dazzling effulgent. He can next concentrate his mind upon the Lord's conch shell and *kaumudakī* club, which is smeared with the blood of the demons. One should also meditate upon His garland, which is always surrounded by buzzing bumblebees, and the pearl necklace around His neck, which is considered to be the pure living entities that are always engaged in His service.

The devotee should next meditate upon the lotus-

like face of the Lord. His nose is prominent, and the glittering of His alligator-shaped earrings illuminates His crystal-clear cheeks. The Lord's beautiful face is adorned with curly black hair and decorated by lotus-petal eyes and dancing eyebrows.

Thereafter, the yogi should meditate with full devotion upon the compassionate glances that the Lord frequently casts, for they soothe the most fearful miseries of material life. Those glances, which are accompanied by smiles of love, are full of abundant mercy. The yogi should meditate upon the benevolent smile of the Lord, for it dries up the ocean of tears that is caused by intense grief. He should also meditate upon the Lord's arched eyebrows, because they charm the god of sex for the welfare of the sages.

Then, with a heart filled with love and devotion, the devotee should think of the laughter of Lord Vishnu, which is extremely captivating. When the Lord laughs, His small teeth, which resemble jasmine buds made rosy by the splendor of His lips, become visible. Once having devoted his mind to this vision, the yogi should no longer desire to see anything else.

By following this process of meditation, the yogi gradually develops pure attachment to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The hair on his body stands erect due to excessive joy, and he is constantly bathed in the stream of tears brought about by his intense love for the Lord. The body of such a liberated yogi, who is absorbed in *samādhī*, is taken care of by the Supreme Lord Himself. Thus, the yogi no longer even understands how the body is moving, or if he does, he considers its activities to be like the activities of a body in a dream.

The continual process of birth and death

Devahuti said, "My dear Lord, please describe in detail the continual process of birth and death, for by hearing of such calamities we may become detached from the activities of this material world."

In response, Lord Kapila described the movements of the living entities and the results of adverse fruitive activities: "Just as a mass of clouds cannot understand the powerful influence of the wind that carries it, so a person in material consciousness cannot understand how he is being carried by the powerful time factor."

"Whatever such a materialist produces with great pain and labor for the purpose of achieving so-called happiness is destroyed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the time factor, and thus he laments."

"He foolishly takes his body and bodily relations to be permanent and whatever species he appears in, he becomes satisfied with that condition and thus is unwilling to give up his body, even when in hell. Such satisfaction with one's standard of life is due to



a deep-rooted attraction for the body, wife, children and the rest. Although burning with anxiety, such a fool performs mischievous acts to maintain his family while keeping within his heart a hope that is never to be fulfilled."

"He gives his heart and senses to a woman who falsely charms him with maya and thus he enjoys her embraces and talks in a solitary place. The attached householder is similarly enchanted by the sweet words of his small children and so he remains in family life, which is full of politics and diplomacy."

"While trying to counteract the miseries of life, he secures money by lying, cheating and committing violence. Although he employs his income in the service of his family, the attached householder eats only a small portion of the food purchased and then goes to hell for those who he earned money by sinful means."

"After suffering repeated failures in business, a man will finally beg, borrow or steal money so that he can go on maintaining his family and social position. If unsuccessful, however, he always thinks of his failure, and thus, due to intense grief and anxiety, he becomes bereft of all beauty. Upon seeing him unable to support them properly, a man's wife and other dependents do not treat him as respectfully as before, just as miserly farmers neglect their old and worn-out oxen. And yet, although those who he formerly supported now neglectfully maintain him, the foolish family man does

not become averse to household life. Finally, after becoming deformed by the influence of old age, he prepares to meet his death.”

“While remaining at home and accepting whatever remnants of food are given to him, just like a pet dog, he becomes afflicted with numerous diseases. Due to loss of appetite, he can only eat a small morsel of food, and because of invalidity, he can no longer work. His eyes begin to bulge from their sockets, because of the pressure of air from within, and because of the congestion of mucus, he has difficulty breathing and thus makes a peculiar sound while inhaling and exhaling.”

“In this way, he finally comes under the clutches of death and so he lies down, surrounded by his lamenting relatives. Although he wants to impart some final instructions to his family members, he no longer has the power of speech, and thus he dies a frustrated man, practically bereft of consciousness due to the great pain.”

“At the time of death, he sees the Yamadutas wrathfully come before him, and thus in great fear he passes stool and urine. Just as the police arrest a criminal, the Yamadutas take away a man who has engaged in sinful sense gratification. After binding him around the neck with a strong rope they cover his subtle body so that he may undergo severe punishment. While being carried away by the Yamadutas, he trembles in their hands. Under the scorching sun, he has to pass along roads of hot sand while forest fire rage on both sides. While dogs continually bite him, the Yamadutas whip his back when he becomes too tired to walk. Although greatly afflicted by hunger and thirst, the sinful person finds no drinking water or resting-place along the road.”

“Sometimes he falls unconscious due to fatigue and yet he is forced by the Yamadutas to get up and continue walking. Because all this is enacted on the subtle platform, he passes 99,000 yojanas (792,000 miles) in just two or three minutes. After being brought into the presence of Yamaraja, the sinful person is immediately engaged in the torturous punishments he is destined to suffer.”

“He may be placed in the midst of burning wood so that his limbs are set on fire. He may have to eat his own flesh, or have it eaten by others. Dogs and vultures may tear out his intestines, although he remains alive to see it, and snakes, scorpions, spiders, or mosquitoes may torment him. Sometimes his limbs may be cut off or torn apart by elephants. He may be thrown from hilltops, confined within a cave, or kept underwater.”

“Especially those persons whose lives were built around illicit sex indulgence are put into very miserable conditions in the hells known as *tāmisra*, *andha-*

tāmisra and *raurava*. The money acquired by envying others is the passage money by which he leaves this world. After suffering in hell, one has to pass through the lower forms of life in a regular order so as to become purged of his sins and thus once again be reborn as a human being upon the earth.”

“Under the supervision of the Supreme Lord, according to his *karma*, the living entity is put into a particle of male semen and then injected into the mother’s womb so that he can assume a particular type of body. On the first night, the semen and ovum mix, and by the fifth day, the mixture ferments into a bubble. By the tenth day it develops into a small lump of flesh, and at the end of one month, the head is formed. At the end of two months, the fingers, toes, hair, bones and skin appear, as well as the nine outlets. Within four months, the seven essential ingredients of the body come into being – skin, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and semen. At the end of five months, hunger and thirst are felt, and by the end of six months, the fetus begins to move on the right side of the abdomen if a male and on the left side if a female.”

“The fetus grows by receiving nutrition from the food and drink that are consumed by the mother and passed on through the umbilical cord. All the while, he remains in an abominable place, which is the breeding ground for all kinds of worms, due to the presence of stool and urine.”

“Since his tender body is bitten all over by these hungry worms, the child suffers terribly and thus loses consciousness from moment to moment. Owing to the mother’s eating food that is too bitter, pungent, sour or salty, the child suffers almost unbearable pain. While placed within the amnion and surrounded by the mother’s intestines, the child remains lying with his head turned toward his belly so that his back and neck are arched like a bow. In this way he is caged without any freedom and is pushed downward by the air that presses against him during the week prior to delivery.”

“If he is specially blessed, the child remembers all the troubles he had endured during his previous one hundred births, and thus he laments grievously.”

“Having developed consciousness from the seventh month, the child begins praying to the Lord with folded hands: “My dear Lord, I am taking shelter of You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because You have put me into this miserable condition of life, You can also give me relief, if You so desire. Because of forgetting my relationship with You, O Lord, I have been put under the control of the material nature, forcing me to undergo a hard struggle for existence while on the path of repeated birth and death.”

“Because maya is so strong, without Your mercy I



will be able to engage in Your transcendental loving service, and therefore I am surrendering unto You. I have fallen into a pool of blood, stool and urine within my mother's womb, and her gastric fire is scorching my body. Being very anxious to get out of here, I have been counting the days and wondering, 'O my Lord, when shall I, a wretched soul, become released from this confinement?'"

"My dear Lord, by Your mercy I have come to my senses, although only ten months old, and thus there is no way for me to properly express my gratitude. By your grace, I have received this human body, which affords the facility for understanding my relationship with You. Although I am in such a miserable condition, I have now come to my clear consciousness. I think that it is better for me to remain here and meditate upon Your lotus feet rather than to come out of the womb and become captured by Your external energy, for that will make me forget everything."

"As the child is thus worshiping the Lord, the wind that helps parturition begins propelling him downward, face first, so that he may be born. After being suddenly pushed by that wind, he comes out of the womb head downward with great difficulty, and due to the severe agony, he is breathless and deprived of memory. Smeared all over with blood and stool, the child cries as he is given to the care of persons who cannot understand his wants."

"Since he is unable to refuse what is given to him, he falls into undesirable circumstances. Being made to lay down on a bed infested with germs, the poor

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

child cannot even scratch his body to get relief from the itching sensation. In that helpless condition, mosquitoes, bugs and germs bite his tender skin, and thus he cries bitterly."

"Due to the spell of maya, he cannot remember the determination to gain salvation he had possessed while within the womb."

"In this way he suffers as a baby. Then, later on, when he is enrolled in school, he also suffers due to being forced to study when he would rather play. In youth, he has so many desires that he cannot fulfill, and thus he gradually becomes angry and frustrated. In order to vanquish his soul, the young man increases his false prestige and anger and thereby creates enmity toward similarly lusty people. By such ignorance, he accepts the material body as the self and other nonpermanent things as his own."

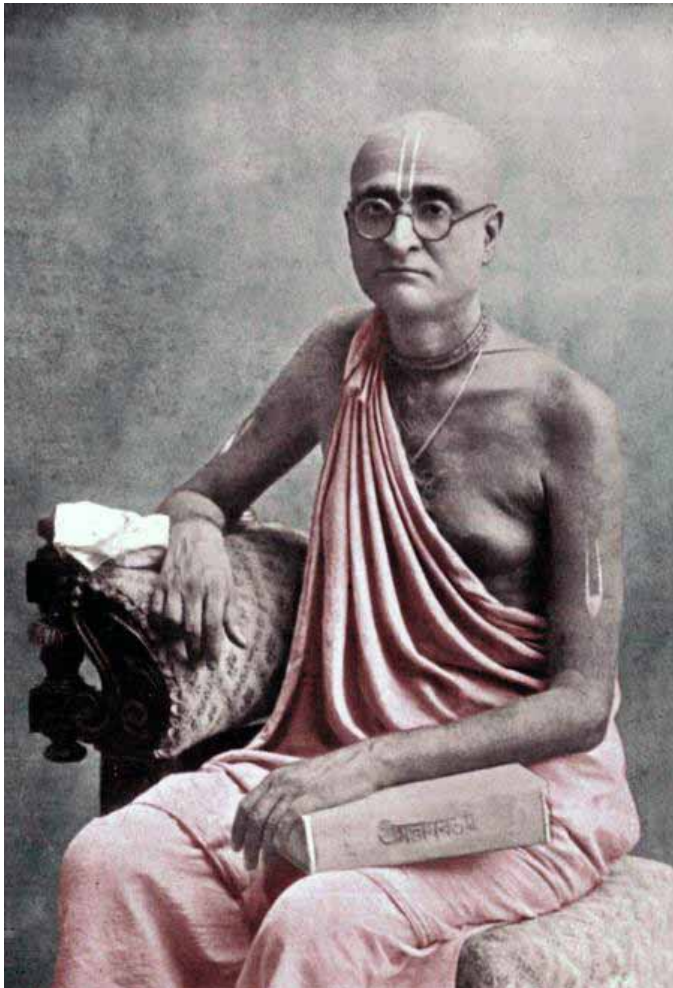
"For the sake of his body, he performs so many sinful activities that keep him within the cycle of repeated birth and death. If he associates with sensually-minded persons who are simply concerned with the satisfaction of the tongue and genitals, then he certainly takes to the path of unrighteousness and thereafter goes to hell again. Because such companionship makes one devoid of truthfulness, cleanliness, mercy, gravity, good intelligence, shyness, austerity, fame, forgiveness, control of the mind and senses, and future good fortune, one should never associate with a course fool who is bereft of the knowledge of self-realization and therefore no better than a dancing dog led around by the hands of a woman."

"There is no greater bondage than that which results from attachment to women or men who are overly fond of women. Even Lord Brahma became bewildered at the sight of his own daughter and thus he shamelessly ran after her in the form of a stag when she took the form of a doe. Amongst all the living beings created by Brahma, only Narayana *Ṛṣi* is immune to attraction for the form of a woman is so great that just by the movement of her eyebrows a woman can keep the greatest world-conquerors under her grip. For this reason, attractive women are declared in *śāstra* to be the gateway to hell, especially for those who are trying to advance in spiritual life."

Thus, hearing from Lord Kapila, mother Devahuti became free from all ignorance and began to engage in the devotional service of the Lord.

— Excerpt from a book "Srimad Bhagavatam in story form" by Purnaprajna dasa » Published by Sri Sri Sitaram Seva Trust .





MATERIAL LIFE

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur

Why do we like material existence?

We are bound to suffer if we cause anxiety to the spiritual master and the Vaishnavas, who are not ordinary like us. The spiritual master and the Vaishnava are by nature harder than a thunderbolt and softer than a rose. We must take utmost care when dealing with Lord Vishnu's devotees. We must not be duplicitous with the spiritual master or the Vaishnavas. Such behavior would be most dangerous.

Unless one gladly follows the spiritual master's orders one cannot call himself a disciple. If one gives up the lifestyle and rules and regulations of the *matha*, one is bound to become a materialist. If one does not realize the importance of living in the *matha*, serving the *matha*, and fulfilling the spiritual master's mission, one will certainly become a materialist. A *matha* is nondifferent from Vaikuntha, and this material world is just like a gateway to hell. As soon as a living entity turns his face away from the Lord's mercy, he falls down to material existence. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.9.10) states:

*ahny āptārta-karaṇā niśi niḥśayānā
nānā-manoratha-dhiyā kṣaṇa-bhagna-nidrāḥ
daivāhatārtha-racanāṣayo 'pi deva
yusmat-prasaṅga-vimukhā iha sanīsaranti*

"Such non-devotees engage their senses in very troublesome and extensive work, and they suffer insomnia at night because their intelligence constantly breaks their sleep with various mental speculations. They are frustrated in all their various plans by supernatural power. Even great sages, if they are against Your transcendental topics, must rotate in this material world."

Constant endeavor to please Krishna is called devotional service. Actually, we have no duty other than to please Krishna at all times. All perfection is achieved simply by chanting the Lord's holy name. We cannot serve the Lord without serving the holy name. If we can become servants of Krishna we will attain the ultimate goal of life, but if we serve Maya no one can protect us from misfortune.

Why does a person who was once properly motivated develops material attachment after some time?

This person must not have heard *hari-kathā*, due to inattention while hearing. He has not tried at all to refrain from seeking immediate happiness. Rather, he is maddened for sense gratification on the advice of sinful people. The most important thing is to take shelter of the Supreme Lord. It does not matter whether we are educated or uneducated, powerful or weak. The living entities are transcendental by nature, but when they think they belong to this world, consisting of the three material modes, they become attached to this world.

Are women and wealth obstacles on the devotional path?

Wealth, women, and fame are each bait for the senses. The conditioned souls are attracted to material enjoyment at every moment because Maya is constantly enticing us by showing us the bait. Tempting us with a woman's association, Maya entangles us in this material world, just as a hunter captures a wild male elephant by luring him with a female elephant.

The living entities wander throughout the universe seeing illusory objects as real and miserable existence as happiness. Maya has arranged for some momentary happiness in this world in order to deceive the living entities. Whatever we see in this world that tempts us for sense gratification is Maya's bait. Anyone who tries to enjoy them will be deceived, will be punished. "Eat,

drink, be merry, and go to hell.” This mentality has swallowed human society. What a shame!

— *Amṛta Vāṇī* - Nectar of Instructions for Immortality » Adapted and Published by Īśvara dāsa » Translated from Bengali by Bhūmipati dāsa » Edited by Kaiśorī devī dāśī » Published by Touchstone Media

**RENUNCIATION OF CONDUCT
UNFAVORABLE TO PURE DEVOTION**
Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur

*viṣaya-vimūḍha āra māyāvādī jan
bhakti-sūnya duihe prāna dhare akāraṇ*

Those bewildered by sense-enjoyment and Mayavadis are devoid of devotion. They maintain their life for no reason.

*ei dui-saṅga nātha! nā hoy āmār
prārthanā koriye āmi caraṇe tomār*

O my Lord! I pray at Your lotus feet, please let me not be in association of either of them.

*se duvera madhye viṣayī tabu bhālo
māyāvādī-saṅga nāhi māgi kono kālo*

Of these two types of people, the sense-enjoyer is a little better. I beg, O Lord, please do not give me association of Mayavadis at any time.

*viṣayī-hṛdoya jabe sādhu-saṅga pāy
anāyāse labhe bhakti bhaktera kṛpāy*

If a person who is a sense-enjoyer at heart, gets association of a saintly person, by his mercy that person easily obtains loving devotional service.

*māyāvāda-doṣa jā'ra hṛdoye paśilo
kutarka hṛdoya tā'ra vajra-sama bhelo*

When the contaminating Mayavada doctrine has been accepted, the heart becomes hard like a thunderbolt.

*bhaktira swarīpa, āra 'viṣaya', 'āśroy'
māyāvādī 'anītya' bolīyā saba koy*

Mayavadis declare devotional service, the object of devotional service (Sri Krishna), and the devotee to be temporary.

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

*dhik tā'ra kṛṣṇa-sevā-śravana-kīrtan
kṛṣṇa-aṅge vajra hāne tāhāra stavan*

To hell with their serving Krishna! To hell with their hearing and chanting! They attack Krishna's limbs as if striking Him with a thunderbolt by their glorification.

*māyāvāda sama bhakti-pratikūla nāi
ataeva māyāvādī-saṅga nāhi cāi*

Nothing is as unfavourable to devotional service as Mayavada-philosophy, therefore I do not wish the company of a Mayavadi.

*bhaktivinoda māyāvāda dūra kori
vaiṣṇava-saṅgete baise nāmāśraya dhori'*

Renouncing Mayavada, this Bhaktivinoda sits in the association of devotees, taking shelter of *nāma*.

—From the book *Sāraṅgati* by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur » Translated by Vrajsevika devi dasi .



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

Nityam Bhagavata-sevaya

A Fortnightly E-Magazine for serving Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

Dedicated to

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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Our upcoming project:

Bhagavata Vidyalaya

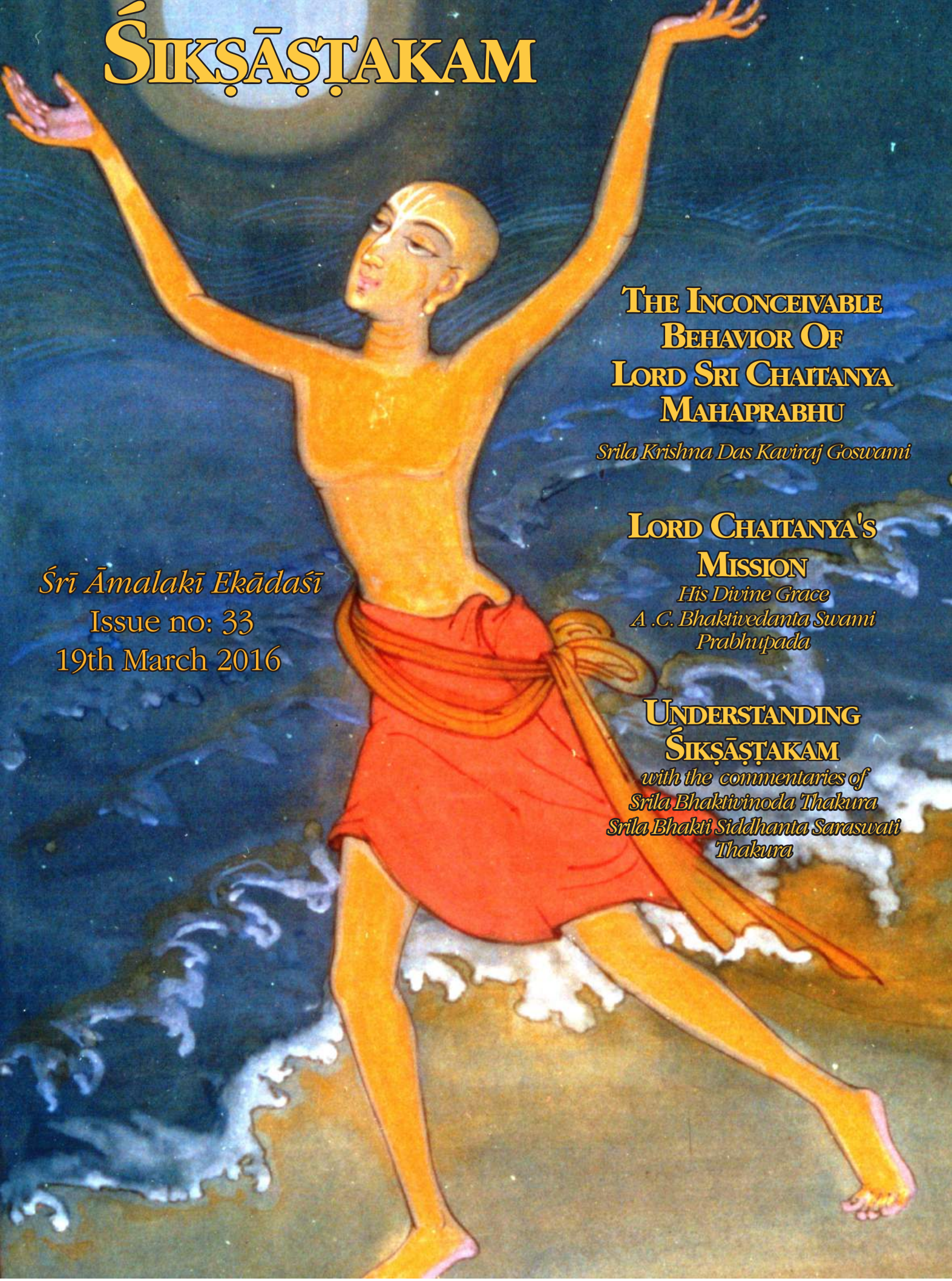
To propagate the teachings of
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in every town and village

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ŚIKṢĀṢṬAKAM



THE INCONCEIVABLE BEHAVIOR OF LORD SRI CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU

Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj Goswami

LORD CHAITANYA'S MISSION

His Divine Grace

*A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupada*

Śrī Āmalakī Ekādaśī

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UNDERSTANDING ŚIKṢĀṢṬAKAM

*with the commentaries of
Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura
Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati
Thakura*



THE INCONCEIVABLE BEHAVIOR OF LORD SRI CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU

Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj Goswami

One full moon night in the month of *Vaiṣākha* [April-May], Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, along with His devotees, entered one of the nicest gardens, called Jagannatha-vallabha. In the garden were fully blossomed trees and creepers exactly like those in Vrindavana. Bumblebees and birds like the *śuka*, *śārī* and *pika* talked with one another. A mild breeze was blowing, carrying the fragrance of aromatic flowers. The breeze had become a guru and was teaching all the trees and creepers how to dance. Brightly illuminated by the full moon, the trees and creepers glittered in the light.

The six seasons, especially spring, seemed present there. Seeing the garden, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was very happy. In this atmosphere, the Lord had His associates sing the verse from the *Gīta-govinda* beginning with the words "*lalita-lavaṅga-latā*" as He danced and wandered about with them. As He thus wandered around every tree and creeper, He came beneath an *aśoka* tree and suddenly saw Lord Krishna. When He saw Krishna, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, began running very swiftly, but Krishna smiled and disappeared. Having gotten Krishna and then lost Him, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu fell to the ground unconscious. The entire garden was filled with the scent of Lord Sri Krishna's transcendental body. When Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu smelled it, He fell unconscious at once. But the scent of Krishna's body incessantly entered His nostrils, and the Lord became mad to relish it.

Srimati Radharani once spoke a verse to Her gopi friends describing how She hankers for the transcendental scent of Krishna's body. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu recited that same verse and made its meaning clear.

*kuraṅga-mada-jid-vapuḥ-parimalormi-kṛṣṭāṅganah
svakāṅga-nalināṣṭake śaśi-yutābja-gandha-prathaḥ
madenduvāra-candanāguru-sugandhi-carcāritah
sa me madana-mohanah sakhi tanoti nāsā-sphṛām*

"The scent of Krishna's transcendental body surpasses the aroma of musk and attracts the minds of all women. The eight lotuslike parts of His body distribute the fragrance of lotuses mixed with that of camphor. His body is anointed with aromatic substances like musk, camphor, sandalwood and aguru. O My dear friend, that Personality of Godhead, also known as the

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enchanter of Cupid, always increases the desire of My nostrils."

"The scent of Krishna's body surpasses the fragrances of musk and the bluish lotus flower. Spreading throughout the fourteen worlds, it attracts everyone and makes the eyes of all women blind. My dear friend, the scent of Krishna's body enchants the entire world. It especially enters the nostrils of women and remains seated there. Thus it captures them and forcibly brings them to Krishna. Krishna's eyes, navel and face, hands and feet are like eight lotus flowers on His body. From those eight lotuses emanates a fragrance like a mixture of camphor and lotus. That is the scent associated with His body. When sandalwood pulp is mixed with aguru, *kunkuma*, musk and camphor and spread on Krishna's body, it combines with Krishna's own original bodily perfume and seems to cover it. The scent of Krishna's transcendental body is so attractive that it enchants the bodies and minds of all women. It bewilders their nostrils, loosens their belts and hair, and makes them madwomen. All the women of the world come under its influence, and therefore the scent of Krishna's body is like a plunderer. Falling completely under its influence, the nostrils yearn for it continuously, although sometimes they obtain it and sometimes not. When they do they drink their fill, though they still want more and more, but if they don't, out of thirst they die. The dramatic actor Madana-mohana has opened a shop of scents that attract the women of the world to be His customers. He delivers the scents freely, but they make the women all so blind they cannot find the path returning home."

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu His mind thus stolen by the scent of Krishna's body, ran here and there like a bumblebee. He ran to the trees and plants, hoping that Lord Krishna would appear, but instead He found only that scent. Both Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya sang to the Lord, who danced and enjoyed happiness until the morning arrived. Then the Lord's two associates devised a plan to bring Him to external consciousness.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu then bathed and went to see Lord Jagannatha. The pastimes of Lord Krishna are uncommonly full of transcendental potency. It is a characteristic of such pastimes that they do not fall within the jurisdiction of experimental logic and arguments. When transcendental love of Krishna awakens in someone's heart, even a learned scholar cannot comprehend His activities. The activities and symptoms of that exalted personality in whose heart love of Godhead has awakened cannot be understood even by the most learned scholar.

The activities of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu are



undoubtedly uncommon, especially His talking like a madman. Therefore, one who hears of these pastimes should not put forward mundane arguments. He should simply hear the pastimes with full faith. The evidence of the truth of these talks is found in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. There, in the section of the Tenth Canto known as the *Bhramara-gīta*, "The Song to the Bumblebee," Srimati Radharani speaks insanely in ecstatic love for Krishna. The songs of the queens at Dvaraka, which are mentioned at the end of the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, have a very special meaning. They are not understood even by the most learned scholars. If one becomes a servant of the servants of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Nityānanda Prabhu and is favored by Them, he can believe in all these discourses.

Residing at Jagannātha Puri [Nilacala], Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was continuously overwhelmed, night and day, by separation from Krishna. He passed His nights tasting the meaning of the *Śikṣāṣṭaka* prayers in the company of Svarupa Damodara Goswami and Ramananda Raya. Sometimes He recited verses from Jayadeva Goswami's *Gīta-govinda*, from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, from Sri Ramananda Raya's *Jagannātha-vallabha-nāṭaka* or from Sri Bilvamangala Thakura's *Kṛṣṇa-karmāmṛta*. He relished the symptoms of various transcendental emotions, such as jubilation, lamentation, anger, humility, anxiety, grief, eagerness and satisfaction. He would recite His own verses, expressing their meanings and emotions, and thus enjoy tasting them with these two friends. Sometimes the Lord would be absorbed in a particular emotion and would stay awake all night reciting related verses and relishing their taste.

Just try to hear these topics with faith, for there is great pleasure even in hearing them. That hearing will destroy all miseries pertaining to the body, mind and other living entities, and the unhappiness of false arguments as well. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is ever-increasingly fresh. For one who hears it again and again, the heart and ear become pacified.

—*Caitanya-caritāmṛta* » *Antya-līlā* » Chapter 19 : The Inconceivable Behavior of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu » Verses: 78-110 ॐ

LORD CHAITANYA'S MISSION

His Divine Grace

A .C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupada

Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu instructed His disciples to write books on the Science of Krishna, a task which those who follow Him have continued to carry out down to the present day. The elaborations and expositions on the philosophy taught by Lord Chaitanya are in fact most voluminous, exacting and consistent due to the system of disciplic succession. Although Lord Chaitanya was widely renowned as a scholar in His youth, He left only eight verses, called *Śikṣāṣṭaka*. These eight verses clearly reveal His mission and precepts.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur says in this connection: "O living entities, simply engage yourselves in Krishna consciousness. This is the message of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu." Lord Chaitanya preached this cult, instructing the philosophy of Krishna consciousness in His eight verses, or *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, and He said, *ihā haite sarva-siddhi haibe sabāra*: "By chanting the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*, one will get



all perfection in life.”

—*Caitanya-caritāmṛta » Ādi-līlā » Chapter 8: The Author Receives the Orders of Krishna and Guru » Verse:12 and Introduction to Teachings of Lord Chaitanya* ॐ

UNDERSTANDING ŚIKṢĀṢṬAKAM

with the commenatries of

Srila Bhaktivinod Thakura and

Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakura

Verse 1

*ceto-darpaṇa-mārjananī
bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpananī
śreyah-kairava-candrikā-
vitaranānī vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam
ānandāmbudhi-vardhananī
prati-padānī pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanānī
sarvātma-snapananī parānī
vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam*

The verse beginning with *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjananī* describes the original transcendental nature of the jīva. As Srila Jiva Goswami has explained, the jīva is a part and parcel of the Supreme Absolute Truth who is the Supreme Energetic, the total aggregate of all jīvas “Like a ray of the sun, the jīva is of the same spiritual nature as the Supreme, but infinitesimal in size. Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana has analyzed Godhead as the infinite Supreme Lord, and the jīva as His infinitesimal part. All the transcendental qualities are eternally present in perfect fullness in the Supreme Lord. His pure ego is manifest as both the Absolute knowledge and the knower. Similarly, the jīva is also in possession of transcendental knowledge and pure ego (though in partial degree). This is logical because qualities such as heat and light present in the sun are also present in the sun's rays.

It is therefore clear that the jīva is infinitesimal, possessing; a transcendental nature of pure ego, pure soul, and pure form. But when he turns away from God and contemplates enjoying material energy, his pure nature becomes contaminated by nescience. It is for this reason that the soul has been compared to a mirror. Just as it is impossible to see one's face in a dusty mirror, it is similarly impossible to see the real self the mirror of consciousness if it is covered by the dust of ignorance. When if one begins to render loving devotionl service particularly hearing and chanting the sacred names and pastimes of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna directly under the control of His *hlādinī* (spiritual pleasure) potency, eradicates the material

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contamination or nescience completely. The jīva's pure consciousness, which is a function of his pure ego manifests itself and he sees the Supreme Lord, *jīva prakṛti* (nature), *kalā*(time), and *karmā*(action and reaction), all five fundamental principles of existence reflected on the mirror of his pure ego with absolute clarity. So in the mirror of his pure consciousness he sees the reflection of his original identity without any distortion. This helps him to know his true religion and inherent nature as an eternal servant of the Lord. When one becomes really expert in serving the Lord, then his propensity to enjoy material life is converted into a loving devotional mood of service.

The purport of the word *bhāva* is that jīva is being subjected to take repeated births in this world, a continuous cycle of birth and death called *mahā-dāvāgni*, or blazing fire, a raging conflagration that cannot be extinguished by any means other than the congregational chanting of Krishna's holy name.

A question may arise at this point: when one is enlightened about his *sva-dharma*, or eternal intrinsic nature and duty, does he then cease to chant Krishna's holy name? The answer is no, this never occurs. chanting God's name is the soul's *sva-dharma*. The phase *śreyah-kairava-candrika-vitaranam*, which describes the holy name, specifically conveys the sense eternal activity of the spirit soul in his original spiritual condition.

The jīvas who are enslaved by *maya* prefer to remain in that condition to enjoy material life, and that desire literally binds them to the cycle of birth and death. This is the root cause of their threefold miseries. But the spirit soul reaps the greatest benefit when he becomes disgusted with material enjoyment, and re-dedicates his time and energy to Lord Krishna's loving service. This benediction is compared with the flowering of a cluster of pristine white lotuses. For just as the moon's soothing rays cause the white lotuses to blossom, the rays of the mellow taste of chanting the holy name resuscitate the languishing petals of the lotus of benediction for the jīva.

A pertinent query at this juncture would be: at what stage does a person who has attained the level of pure devotion acquire his pure spiritual identity—his *sva-dharma*? Lord Chaitanya replies by saying *vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam*, “the life of all transcendental knowledge”. The Supreme Lord's *śakti* has two aspects: *vidyā*, or knowledge, and *avidyā*, or ignorance. Yogamaya, Sri Krishna's *svanīpa-śakti* or internal spiritual potency, is called *vidyā* whereas His external energy mahamaya is *avidyā*. And it is this latter that creates the material universe and covers the soul's *svanīpa*. When the first rays of pure devotion finally appear on the horizon



of the *sādhaka's* heart by his sincerely following the process of hearing and chanting, then gradually bhakti-devi, or the goddess of pure devotional process, the eradicator of all unwanted material desires detrimental to the Lord's service, eclipses the *avidyā* potency. By suffusing the soul with spiritual knowledge, She destroys both the gross and subtle coverings of the soul. Simultaneously, the jiva's original spiritual form becomes manifest, to the extent that he receives the form of a gopi, for example, if his spiritual proclivity is steeped in the conjugal mood. Thus it stands proven that Krishna's name is the life and soul of all transcendental knowledge, *vidyā-vadhū-jivanam*. *Svarūpa-śakti* has therefore often been described as Krishna's wife. The Sanskrit word *vadhū* means wife.

The gross and subtle material bodies of the jiva being completely destroyed, the infinitesimal soul regains his original pristine purity. Although the jiva is *anu*, or minutely small, his spiritual happiness is not minute. To remove this misapprehension, Lord Chaitanya adds *anandambudhi-varḍhanam*, "an ever-increasing ocean of bliss". In other words, the holy name of the Lord endlessly expands the spiritual bliss inherent to the soul, by leaps and bounds. He thus becomes eternally fixed in one of the spiritual mellows, namely *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, or *mādhurya* (servitorship, friendship, parenthood and conjugal love) Established in his eternal spiritual mellow, he begins to relish limitless nectar at every stage of his transcendental relationship and exchanges of extraordinary loving emotions with the Supreme Lord. The Supreme Lord Krishna's enchanting beauty, His divine qualities and His sublime pastimes are ever-ecstatic and eternal. Inebriated with divine *prema*, the pure jiva continuously drinks that sweet nectar, but still the Lord's captivating beauty remains ever-fresh and ambrosial, relished in endlessly unique and novel ways.

In this stage one final question may still arise: is this happiness self-motivated, and thus contrary to the principles of pure spiritual love? If so, how can the jiva's happiness be called unalloyed and spiritual? To allay any such confusion or doubt, Lord Chaitanya uses the expression *sarvatma-saṅgamanam*: the bliss of Krishna consciousness is completely pure, wholly free from any desire for self-satisfaction. That is to say, in the natural course of pure devotional service, one attains the form of a maidservant of Srimati Radharani, who embodies the zenith of *mahābhāva*, or unsurpassable heights of exultations; and in Her service the jiva participates in conjugal pastimes with the Lord and experiences unlimited ecstatic bliss. This sublime mood is therefore untainted by even the slightest tinge of selfish lust or self-indulgent craving. This phrase also indicates that neither the contamination of *sayujya-mukti*, i.e. the

desire to merge with the Lord, nor the impurity of self gratification, can contaminate the heart of the jiva in this state of perfect bliss.

May the chanting of the holy name of Krishna be ever-victorious, for it is adorned with seven transcendental qualities, It is the embodiment of eternality, it is knowledge, and it is the highest bliss, steeped in the wonderful and variegated amorous pastimes of Sri Sri Radha Krishna.

Seven transcendental qualities of holynome

One's knowledge of any mundane subject matter is bound to be incomplete, because the subject itself is incomplete. In the spiritual world, however, Lord Krishna is the ultimate subject, and being transcendental, this plane remains forever untouched by material nature. By thus discussing transcendental subject matter, or Sri Krishna, one achieves supra-mundane perfection. Seven of these perfections, specially related to chanting Lord Krishna's holy name are mentioned in this verse.

1) Cleanses the mirror of the heart: Chanting Lord Krishna's name cleanses the mirror of the conditioned soul's polluted heart, which is wholly covered by three contaminations, namely material desires, the enjoying spirit, and ungodly atheistic activities. The most effective process to cleanse the jiva's heart of all these impurities is chanting Lord Krishna's name. These treacherous contaminations, cover the mirror of consciousness and cause the jiva to reject his true nature. Krishna's name alone can free the consciousness of these aberrations. Thus by constantly chanting, taking complete shelter of the holy name, the jiva gradually perceives the reflection of his original form as the servant of Lord Krishna in the mirror of his consciousness.

2) Protects the devotee from material existence: This material existence appears to be sweet and pleasurable, but in reality it is like a forest-fire, which can burn the entire forest to ashes. Non-devotees who have no faith in Lord Krishna have to constantly tolerate the searing burning pain of this forest-fire. On the other hand, when Lord Krishna's name is perfectly chanted, the chanters are protected from these scorching flames, even though they are in the midst of the forest of the material world.

3) The holy name gives the highest benediction: Whole hearted chanting of Lord Krishna's holy name is the highest goodness and munificence. *Sreyah* means 'benediction', *kairava* means 'white lilies', and *candrika* are the rays of the moon. By the illuminating rays of the rising moon, the white lily's beauty is highlighted. Similarly, the chanting of Krishna's name brings out the best in man and enlightens the darkened universe showering it with divine benediction. Human society cannot truly benefit from fruitive activities or speculative



knowledge, but by chanting Krishna's name, all will be blessed with greatest benefit.

4) The source of all transcendental knowledge:

The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* mentions two types of knowledge: material and transcendental. Chanting of Lord Krishna's holy name is indirectly the fountainhead of all material knowledge. However, it is directly the life and soul of transcendental, or supra-mundane knowledge. Chanting induces the jiva to break the shackles of false ego and false prestige—a product of material knowledge, and elevates him to understand his eternal relationship with the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. The ultimate focus of real transcendental knowledge, therefore, is chanting Krishna's holy name.

5) Expands the ocean of bliss: Chanting the holy name expands the boundless ocean of transcendental bliss, and enables one to fully relish the sweetest nectar at every moment. Nothing less than a vast expanse of water is called an ocean. Therefore the unlimited bliss attained through chanting the holy names has been rightly compared to an ocean. This transcendental experience is untouched by imperfections, complete and everlasting. In the mundane realm, the body and mind, and above them the soul, not only become purified by Krishna's name, but gradually and inevitably embalmed by its cooling tenderness. The potency of the holy name is so great that by its touch, even the spiritual objects take on its unprecedented qualities.

6) Cures the disease of material existence: The spirit soul under the material conception of life is overwhelmed by subtle and gross contaminations. These material afflictions can at once be cured by chanting the holy name. When the soul is released from his material designations, he becomes eager to reach the transcendental realm, where he engages in devotional service under the cooling shade of Lord Krishna's lotus feet.

7) The essential ingredient in all devotional service: Srila Jiva Goswami writes in the *Bhakti-sandarbhā* [273], and in the *Krama-sandarbhā*:

*ata eva yadyapyanya bhaktih kalau kartavya
tada kīrtanakhya-bhakti-samyogenaiva*

This means that in Kali-yuga the practice of the eight limbs of devotional service, must be performed in conjunction with chanting the holy names of Krishna.

Verse: 2

*nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktiḥ
tatrārpitā nīyamitāḥ smaraṇe na kālaḥ
etādṛśi tava kṛpā bhagavan mamāpi
durdaivam īdṛśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ*

“O Lord, out of Your causeless mercy You have manifested Your innumerable names and empowered Them with Your own transcendental potencies. You have not imposed rigid rules for chanting and remembering these names, nor laid down conditions barring anyone from chanting or remembering Your name even during eating, reclining, or sleeping. But I am so wretched that I am not attracted to Your names.”

The chanting of Lord Krishna's holy name is represented in four aspects: name, form, quality and pastime. Lord Krishna's holy name is the seed of all joy; for the holy name and the possessor of the name are non-different. In all respects, chanting the holy name is most beneficial for everyone and all. Therefore, the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya Himself reveals all the super-excellent attributes of the holy name. In order to evoke everyone's sincere faith in the holy name, Lord Chaitanya prays: “O Lord! O Most Munificent One! Being compassionate upon seeing the destitute situation of the conditioned souls, of Your own accord You have manifested Your holy name, which is non-different from Yourself. Your holy names are of two types: principal and secondary. Hari, Krishna, Govinda, Acyuta, Rama, Ananta, Visnu, etc., are Your principal names; while Brahma, Supersoul, Supreme Controller, Maintainer, Creator, Mahendra, etc., are Your secondary names.

You have invested all Your spiritual potencies and transcendental qualities to the absolute degree in Your principal names, a fact that is substantiated by innumerable scriptural statements, like these from the Vedas: “My Lord, it is possible for one to be immediately cleansed from all material contaminations just by seeing You. What to speak of beholding You in person, merely by hearing Your Lordship's holy name but once, even *caṇḍālas*, the lowest of men, are freed from material contaminations.

“The amount of time that a *dvija-brāhmaṇa* spends in studying and reciting Vedic *mantras*, if utilized in chanting the Lord's name, even indirectly, would yield more benefit. Of this there is no doubt. One who chants these two syllables 'Ha' and 'ri' has already mastered the four Vedas: *R̥g*, *Yajur*, *Sāma*, and *Atharva*. One is therefore advised, not to spend time studying the Vedas; he should simply chant the name of Govinda continuously.

And from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* : “O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of great spiritual authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are desirous solely of material enjoyment, those who are totally free from all material enjoyments, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge.”



“O Lord Vishnu Your holy name is fully spiritual, and it is self-manifested. If one chants the holy name knowing only a little of its vast glories, he gradually acquires perfect understanding of the subject. Lord Brahma, the first to propagate the transcendental sound *om*, the mere utterance of which liberates one from the dreadful dilemma of death and nescience. Hence the vibration *om* is also known as *taraka brahma*.”

“Any person who vibrates the holy name Hari just once without offence immediately becomes resolved to serve the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord unconditionally, and strives for liberation.”

“Certainly that heart is steel-framed which, in spite of one's chanting the holy name of the Lord with concentration, does not change when ecstasy takes place, tears fill the eyes and the hairs of the body stand on end.”

“O venerable Bhṛigu, the holy name of Krishna is sweeter than the sweetest honey, the most beneficial activity among all auspicious deeds. It is the eternal and mature transcendental fruit of the Vedic desire-fulfilling tree. Any person who utters this holy name but once, whether sincerely or casually, but without offenses, is instantaneously liberated.”

“O Arjuna! Truly I say unto you that anyone who chants My name, being devoted to Me, has certainly purchased Me. I become his property, fully dependent upon him.”

“Lord Krishna's holy name is like a touchstone gem, capable of fulfilling all desires. His name is directly the Lord Himself, and therefore non-different from Him. It is the complete whole, transcendental and eternally liberated, because Lord Krishna and His holy name are the same in principle.”

“No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Sri Krishna through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental names, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him.”

We can easily understand from these statements of different revealed scriptures that the holy name is endowed with unlimited spiritual potencies. Practice of *karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga* always bound by specific rules and restrictions, and by the factors of time, place and circumstance. But in chanting and remembering the Lord's name there is no such consideration. This indeed is an example of the Lord's fathomless mercy.

When the jīva strives for insignificant and evanescent material results, he finds himself grappling with the stringent laws of nature and the inexorable influence of time. But for one who chants the holy names, the Supreme Lord removes all insurmountable obstacles

by His causeless mercy. In the *Caitanya-Bhāgavata* [CB *Madhya-khaṇḍa* 28.28] we find this statement: “Always remember to chant the holy name, whether sleeping, eating or waking.” Again in *Caitanya-Bhāgavata* [CB *Madhya-khaṇḍa* 23.78]: “There are no hard and fast rules for chanting, so chant always.” This same instruction is repeated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* [Antya 20.18]: “Regardless of time or place, one who chants the holy name, even while eating or sleeping, attains all perfection.”

Verse: 3

*ṭṭṇād api su-nīcena
taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā māna-dena
kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

“One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honor yet is always prepared to give all respect to others can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord.”

The devotee who chants the holy name offenselessly is adorned with four very special qualities: a natural meekness and humility because of his complete detachment from matter, a pure compassion unencumbered by envy, a spotless heart free from mundane false prestige, and a respectful attitude towards everyone.

Humbler than a blade of grass

“The misery stemming from poverty, disease, calamity, old age, etc., and happiness due to wealth, health, beauty, education, etc., are all *prārabdha* karmic reactions which I shall inevitably have to experience. Loss and gain, birth and death, suffering and joy are in no way connected to spiritual life rather they are wholly mundane, thus inconsequential to my real life. I will therefore approach the Lord with utmost humility and pray, ‘O Krishna, O Govinda, O Lord of my heart, when will I be engaged in Your divine service? Kindly be merciful upon this lowly creature and quickly accept me as Your servitor.’ In this mood I shall either enter the forest or remain home, and living frugally, I shall somehow sustain my life. Although grass is matter, it's ego is natural and proportionate to it, whereas my false ego, made up of my gross and subtle bodies, is utterly illusory because it is not connected to my original spiritual self. It is only proper, therefore, that I become more humble than a blade of grass.”

More tolerant than a tree

Now to explain the real purport of *taror api sahiṣṇunā*—‘more tolerant than a tree’. The tree is



considered tolerant because it never neglects to offer its cooling shade and succulent fruits, even to the wood-cutter who is going to cut it down. The devotee of Lord Krishna is kinder still because he is compassionate to every living entity, whether friend or foe, desiring only their highest welfare. One who chants offenselessly is overwhelmed with thoughts of others' well-being. Thus the second special quality; compassion without envy is being described. He thinks, "O Lord, my friends and companions and all living entities are so unfortunate. How can they develop love and attraction for chanting Your all-auspicious names? They are sopped down in the quagmire of family attachment, wealth, property, successes, failures, loss and profit, joys and sorrows, birth and death, etc., all because they are blinded by *maya*. There is not the slightest indication that they are disgusted with a futile material existence filled with anarthas, or unwanted things. They are slowly strangling on the rope of unlimited desires for mundane sense gratification, all the while busying themselves in vacuous pursuits of fruitive action that promise them divine pleasures, and of empirical knowledge, that tantalize them with the promise of liberation. How can these persons become attracted to self-realization?" Praying to the Lord in this way, the devotee's heart is flooded with spiritual emotions, and he begins to sing loudly,

*harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatiṁ anyathā*

"In the age of Kali there is no other way, there is no other way, there is no other way than chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name of the Lord Hari."

Freedom from false prestige

The word *amani* describes the third quality of the devotee who chants offenselessly—a spotless heart free from false ego and false prestige. He who in spite of having every reason to be proud, demonstrates tolerance, humility, and a spotless heart is a fit candidate to chant purely. A devotee of Krishna, whether he is a *brāhmaṇa* living in the house, must subdue the pride of being a *brāhmaṇa*, and if he is living a renounced life in the forest, must conquer the supercilious attitude careful to avoid becoming proud of being a *brāhmaṇa*, of being a renunciant. He should simply concentrate on the lotus feet of Krishna and chant His holy name.

Offering all respect to others

Next, the word *manada* means to offer all respect to others. This is the fourth symptom of the devotee who chants without offenses. He understands that all living entities are eternal servants of Lord Krishna, so he is never envious of anyone. He pleases everyone with

sweet and sincere words, and his exemplary life brings benediction to the whole world. In this world, he offers his respect to distinguished personalities and learned *brāhmaṇas*, and to Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva and other demigods he offers his obeisances with utmost humility, praying to them to increase his devotion to Lord Krishna. To elevated Vaishnavas and pure devotees, he offers his services with heart and soul.

Chanting the holy name adorned with these four blessed qualities is the highest success of human life. This is the message of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu the most magnanimous incarnation and savior of the fallen souls of Kali-yuga. In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* [Antya 20.22-26] it is stated: "These are the symptoms of one who chants the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*. Although he is very exalted, he thinks himself lower than the grass on the ground, and like a tree he tolerates everything. When a tree is cut down, it does not protest, and even when drying up, it does not ask anyone for water. It yields up its fruits, flowers and whatever else it possesses to anyone and everyone, tolerating scorching heat and torrents of rain, yet giving shelter to all. Although a Vaishnava is the most exalted person, he is prideless and gives all respect to everyone, knowing everyone to be the residence of Krishna. If one chants the holy name of Lord Krishna in this manner, he will certainly awaken his dormant love for Krishna's lotus feet."

Verse: 4

*na dhamāṁ na jamaṁ na suṁdaraṁ
kavitaṁ vā jagadīśa kāmāye
mama janmani jamaṁśvare
bhavatād bhaktir ahaitukī twayi*

"O Lord of the Universe! I have no desire for material wealth, following, or beautiful poetry. You are the object of My worship and devotional love, life after life; I only pray that I may have unconditional love and devotion at Your lotus feet."

It is imperative that in the very beginning, the sincere *sādhaka* attentively hear his guru chanting the holy name, and thereafter himself chant the holy name free from all *nāmāparādha*. The process of chanting guarantees that the four qualities described in the previous verse will gradually blossom in his heart. Conversely, if the *sādhaka's* attachment to sensual pleasure is not severed, then his original spiritual identity does not become manifest, in which case *bhakti*, which is the intrinsic flavor of the Lord's *hladini* potency, cannot be transformed into *bhāva*, or amorous spiritual mellows.

Sādhana-bhakti means the process of chanting, and the pure form of *sādhana-bhakti* is clearly indicated



in the phrase *na dhanam na janam*. The principal symptom of bhakti is loving devotional service to Lord Krishna; the secondary symptom is freedom from all desires (*anyabhilasita śūnyam*) outside of the path of *bhakti*, which is untainted by *karma* and *jñāna*. As long as loving devotion to Krishna (*amukulyena kṣṇānusīlanam*) is encumbered by desires for *karma*, *jñāna yoga*, the highest stage of loving devotional service, or *uttama-bhakti*, will not manifest; it remains as a mere shadow of devotion, or *bhakti-abhasa*.

The instructions in this verse are meant to dissipate this very shadow *bhakti*. “O Lord, I do not hanker for wealth (*dhanam*), a following (*janam*), or beautiful verses (*sundarim kavitaṁ*).” Here *sundarim kavitaṁ* refers to the religious principles of the Vedas, *dhanam* refers to wealth, and *janam* means wife, children, relatives, etc.: “I do not merely abhor sense gratification derived through religiosity, wealth and lust, but I am appalled at the idea of temporary *mukti*, or liberation, from the cycle of birth and death. I refuse to be enticed by these four Vedic goals (*dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa*), but want only to render service at Your lotus feet.”

King Kulasekhar's prayer captures this mood:

“O my Supreme Lord, I do not want to accumulate heaps of piety by performing sacrifices and executing prescribed duties as recommended in the scriptures, nor do I want great opulence and sense gratification. Whatever reactions I am destined to suffer for my past misdeeds, let them come. What I cherish is the hope that my deep devotion to Your lotus feet may remain undeviating in its firmness, birth after birth.”

The soul's struggle to triumph over repeated birth and death and other material miseries is beyond him, for such victory depends entirely upon the Supreme Lord's will. Yet, all miseries automatically cease when, by the Lord's desire, one is rescued from the cycle of birth and death. Therefore, what is the efficacy of a gross materialistic prayer that is contradictory to the precepts of pure devotion? Lord Chaitanya's prayer is this: “Until such time as the cycle of birth and death is brought to an end by the grace of God, let Me have unconditional devotion to His lotus feet life after life, regardless of what My material situation may be.”

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* [Antya-līla 20.27, 28, 30], it is said: “As Lord Chaitanya spoke in this way, His humility increased and praying to Krishna that He might discharge pure devotional service. Wherever there is a relationship of love of Godhead, it's natural symptom is that the devotee does not think himself a devotee. Instead, he always thinks that he has not even a drop of love for Krishna. [Lord Chaitanya prayed,] 'My dear Lord Krishna, I do not want material wealth from You, nor do

I want followers, a beautiful wife or the results of fruitive activities. I only pray that by Your causeless mercy, You give Me pure devotional service unto You, life after life.'”

Verse: 5

*ayi nanda-tanuja kiṅkaraṇi
patitaṁ mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau
kṛpāyā tava pāda-paṅkaja-
sthita-dhūli-saḍṣaṇ vicintaya*

“O My Lord, O Krishna, son of Maharaja Nanda, I am Your eternal servant, but because of My own fruitive acts, I have fallen in this horrible ocean of nescience. Now please be causelessly merciful to Me. Consider Me a particle of dust at Your lotus feet.”

Is it proper for a *sādhaka* who has taken shelter of the holy name to discuss the miseries of material life he has to experience? To dissipate this doubt, Lord Chaitanya has composed this verse, the essence of which is as follows: “O Lord Krishna, O son of Nanda Maharaja, I am Your eternal servant, but as a result of my previous activities I have now fallen into this terrible ocean of material existence. Lust, greed, anger, envy, etc., are my adversaries, waiting in the waters like big fish to swallow me up. The boisterous waves of wasted hopes and anxieties are tossing me here and there, making my life miserable. Lashing gales of bad association add further suffering. In this condition, therefore, I see You alone as my succor. Occasionally a small bunch of weeds can be seen floating—these are the weeds of *karma, jñāna, yoga*, austerity, etc. But has anyone ever crossed the mighty ocean of nescience with the help of such paltry flotsam? In trying to swim across this ocean, some have reached out to grab these weeds for support, but unfortunately everything, including the person himself, sinks like dead weights. Factually, I can see that there is no other hope for shelter except Your unlimited mercy.

“The sturdy boat of Your holy name is the only means of crossing over this dangerous ocean of material existence. Considering all these facts with a level head, I begged for the invincible boat of Your holy name from my guru, which he gave me by his causeless mercy. O Lord, You are the renowned protector of Your devotees, who are souls surrendered to Your lotus feet. Therefore please accept this homeless destitute, cleanse me of all my faults, and consider me as a particle of dust at Your lotus feet.”

The message of this verse is that those who are on the path of *bhakti* should completely discard desires for sense enjoyment and liberation. In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* [Antya-līla 20.31, 33-34] it is said: “In great humility, considering Himself a conditioned soul of the material world, Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu again



expressed His desire to be blessed with service to the Lord. 'I am Your eternal servant, but I forgot Your Lordship. Now I have fallen in the ocean of nescience and have been conditioned by the external energy. Be causelessly merciful to Me by giving Me a place with the particles of dust at Your lotus feet so that I may engage in the service of Your Lordship as Your eternal servant.'

Verse 6

*nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā
vadanam gadgada-ruddhayā girā
pulakair nicitam vapuḥ kadā,
tava nāma-graṇaṇe bhaviṣyati*

"My dear Lord, when will My eyes be beautified by filling with tears that constantly glide down as I chant Your holy name? When will My voice falter and all the hairs on My body stand erect in transcendental happiness as I chant Your holy name?"

The previous five verses have examined the following topics: Spiritual life begins with *śraddhā*, or sincere faith, followed by *sādhū-saṅga*, the ninefold process of devotional service starting with hearing, chanting, remembering, and so on. The next topic was the science of self-realization, which destroys ignorance and all unwanted impediments. In due course *nistha* (steadiness), *ruci* (taste), *asakti* (attachment), and *bhāva* (spiritual emotions) were also highlighted. It has thus been shown how with the assistance of pure *bhakti*, which is the essence of the Lord's *hladini-śakti*, the living entity regains, his *svarūpa*, or original spiritual form, by a gradual process. By the time the jiva reaches the stage of *bhāva*, his pure devotional service has reached its pinnacle because it has become a continuous and unbroken process. *Bhāva* is often referred to as *rati*, or attraction, and it is described as the bud that later flowers into full bloom as *prema-bhakti*, or pure loving devotion. Of chanting, hearing and the other limbs of devotional service, begun in the stage of *sādhana-bhakti*, chanting Krishna's name especially becomes intensified in the stage of *bhāva*.

Nine symptoms of bhāva

This particular spiritual platform is marked by nine symptoms: 1) The devotee is tolerant and unperturbed even when faced with a very distressing situation. 2) He is averse to wasting time, and 3) utilizes all his time in the Lord's service. 4) He is prideless, and 5) has complete conviction that he will attain the Lord's lotus feet. 6) Extremely eager and anxious to attain perfection, he has acquired a taste for chanting the holy name and 7) a strong attachment for hearing and speaking about the pastimes and attributes of Lord Krishna, 8) He has no interest in anything that has no direct link to Krishna, and

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9) has developed love for the places of Lord Krishna's pastimes. Scripture says that one who has developed these symptoms is on the threshold of entering the stage of full *bhāva*.

Ecstatic symptoms of bhāva-bhakti

When *sādhana-bhakti* is suffused with *ruci*, or the intense desire to attain the Lord's lotus feet, which softens and melts the heart, it is called *bhāva-bhakti*. The spiritual emotions of *bhāva* are both the rays of the sun of *prema* and the rays of the sun of Krishna unmatched beauty, which embodies pure transcendence. The conclusion is that *bhāva-bhakti*, or *rati*, is *prema*, love, of God, in its budding stage. In this stage the *asta-sattvika-vikara*, or eight ecstatic symptoms, such as crying, goosebumps, etc., begin to manifest slightly on this person. So when the devotee meditates on the Lord's lotus feet, his heart melts, and tears stream from his eyes spontaneously and profusely. Descriptions found in the *Tantras* and *Purāṇas* state that these ecstatic symptoms make a shy but firm beginning in the stage of *bhāva*, and later they deepen and intensify in *prema*. Activities accompanying and correlating these ecstatic emotions of the heart are known as *anubhāva*. They include dancing, rolling on the ground, singing, loud outbursts, bodily spasms, prolonged yawning, long sighs, seeking solitude, drooling saliva, uproarious laughter, swooning, hiccupping, and so on.

Eight primary ecstatic symptoms

There are eight primary ecstatic symptoms, or the *asta-sattvika-vikara*: paralysis, perspiration, goosebumps, pallor, loss of voice, trembling, weeping and swooning. Dancing, singing, crying, goosebumps, and loss of voice are particularly prominent in the stage of *bhāva*, and in this verse, the supreme teacher Lord Sri Chaitanya gives them special mention. He prays, "O Krishna, O son of Maharaja Nanda, when will My eyes be decorated with tears of love when I chant Your holy name? When will My voice choke up with ecstatic emotions? When will My body be filled with horripilation? O Lord, be merciful, that these ecstatic symptoms may decorate My body when I chant Your names!"

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* [Antya-līla 20.37], Lord Chaitanya says: "Without love of Godhead, My life is useless. Therefore I pray that You accept Me as Your servant and give Me the salary of ecstatic love of God."

Verse: 7

*yugāyitam nimeṣeṇa cakṣuṣā prāvṛṣāyitam
śūṇyāyitam jagat sarvaṁ govinda-virahēṇa me*

"My Lord Govinda, because of separation from You, I consider even a moment a great millennium. Tears flow from My eyes like torrents of rain, and I see the entire



world as void.”

When *rati-bhakti* reaches the state of *sthayi-bhāva*, or constancy in spiritual emotions, then in mixing together with the other four *bhāvas*—*vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sāttvika* and *vyabhicāri*—it becomes transformed into *bhakti-rasa*, or the sweet mellow of devotional service. In this stage, the ecstatic symptoms of *anubhāva* and *sāttvika-vikāra* find their full expression. Śrī Rupa Goswami, in describing *prema*, writes in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*:

“*Bhāva-bhakti* which, from its very first stages, so excessively affects the heart that it melts and becomes a sublime salve of love, bringing the highest feelings of divine bliss within easy reach, and generates an intense desire for Krishna. The fully perfected souls term this over-vaulting ecstasy as *prema*.”

From this statement it is obvious that extreme attraction, deep affection, and spontaneous dedication to Lord Krishna is synonymous with *prema*, love of God.

Rasa—ecstatic relationship with Krishna

The relationship between the *viṣaya*, or object of love (Krishna), and the *āśraya*, or the abode of that love (the devotee), is exchanged through five principal *rasas*, or mellows namely, neutral, servitor, friendly, parental and conjugal. When the relationship is cursory, there are seven subsidiary mellows: laughter, wonder, pity, chivalry, anger, fear and ghastliness. Of the principal *rasas*, the conjugal or *mādhurya-rasa* is the most excellent. As *mādhurya-rasa* increases in intensity it becomes *prema*, *prāṇaya*, *māna*, *sneha*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, *bhava* and *mahā-bhāva*, manifesting different features and excellences of divine love one after another.

Development of *rasa*

Śānta-rasa, or neutral love of Godhead, is marked by excessive exultation. Attachment to *brahman* is quintessential in *śānta-rasa*, coupled with an air of disregard and unconcern for everything and all other *rasas*. With the increase of *mamatā*, or affection, this attraction deepens and is then known as *dāsyā-rasa*, or love in servitorship. In awe and reverential worship, there is a lack of *prāṇaya*. But such *prāṇaya* ecstasy, in a mature state turns mischievous and introduces a crooked mood which, due to a plethora of affection, is very unusual in texture. This is known as *māna*. The mood of *māna* becomes active when the devotee expresses loving resentment. Even the Supreme Lord, desires to relish this particular emotional exchange, and especially enjoys the mood of reconciliation with His devotee that follows resentment.

The super-abundance of love that completely melts the heart to a state of unimaginable liquidity is known

as *sneha*, which is indicated by profuse, unchecked tears. It is in this stage that the devotee's yearning to see Krishna never admits fulfillment. Although Krishna is admittedly the master of everyone and everything, in *vaṣalya-rasa* or parental love, the devotee anxiously hopes that no harm befall Him. These are the peculiar symptoms of the mellow of parental love.

Sneha supplemented by intense craving becomes *rāga*, and in this stage of pure love, even a moment's separation from the beloved is unbearable, while in union, even extreme grief feels exhilarating. *Rāga* is disposed in such a manner that the object of worship is made to appreciate His own ever-fresh, perennial form. This ever-new *rāga* transforms itself into *anurāga*, where the sense of lover and beloved enrapturing each other into the state of complete compliance increases. In the rapture of *anurāga*, there are longings to be born as animals and other lower species that have a direct connection with Krishna. This is known as *prema-vaicitra*, or varied love. Even in separation, Krishna begins to manifest Himself as only the lover knows and loves Him, giving the lover excessive bliss.

***Mahā-bhāva*—the last word in ecstasy**

When *anurāga* is filled with unsurpassable and matchless magnificence of love, reaching the plateau of madness, it becomes *mahā-bhāva*. In this stage, even the blinking of an eyelid veiling the view of the beloved for less than a moment, becomes intolerable, and seconds stretch to eons. Separation for even a moment seems to expand to timeless eternity. In *mahā-bhāva*, both in union and in separation, all the symptoms of *sāttvika-bhāva* and *sancari-bhāva* find their fullest expression. In this verse, Lord Chaitanya has very succinctly given us, like an ocean bottled in a pitcher, a synopsis of the elaborate dissertation on the different gradations of the most sublime loving relationship with the Supreme Lord, as found in the *Prīti-sandarbhā* by Śrīla Jīva Gosvami.

Deep feelings of separation

The word *yugāyitanī* is simple and direct. The phrase *govinda-virahaṇa* expresses deep feelings of separation. Self-realized *rasika* devotees have divided *vipralambha*, or the mood of separation, into *purva-rāga*, *māna*, *pravāsa*, and so on. Yet the recondite import lodged deep within this verse composed by Lord Chaitanya is that the devotee living in this world need only relish the separation of *purva-rāga*. The scriptures also say that the mood of *viraha*, or separation, has ten attendant conditions: pondering, sleeplessness, perturbation, emaciation, pallor, incoherent speech, being stricken, madness, delusion, and death (or unconsciousness).

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* [Antya-līla 20.40-41] Lord



Chaitanya says, “In My agitation a day never ends, for every moment seems like a millennium. Pouring incessant tears, My eyes are like clouds in the rainy season. The three worlds have become void because of separation from Govinda. I feel as if I were burning alive in a slow fire.”

Verse: 8

*āśliṣya vā pāda-ratān pinaṣtu mām
adarśanān marma-hatān karotu vā
yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampaṭo
mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ*

“I am simply a lowly maidservant to the gopis, who are absorbed in serving My Lord's lotus feet. He may embrace Me, He may exploit Me, or He may break My heart by not appearing before Me. He is a libertine, ravishing the gopi damsels with His lusty desires. Let His will triumph. Yet, in spite of everything, He is the beloved Lord of My heart, nothing less, nothing more. Lord Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, fully independent. Obeying His wishes is My only religion. I am not independent, or so whimsical that I can recoil from this service attitude and go against His will.”

This verse describes the consciousness of the jiva who reaches the sublime platform of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. “That Supreme adulterer, that libertine Krishna, may bestow upon me, a servant who is totally surrendered to His lotus feet, endless bliss by forcing me into excruciating depths of despair by not being present before me. He may do anything He wishes with me, even to the extent

that He enjoy the company of another beloved gopi in my presence. Yet He will remain always the Lord of my heart. For me there will never be any other.”

Complete surrender to the Lord

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [11.29.34] we find other examples of such fully surrendered souls and their unique position: “When the mortal beings decide to relinquish all fruitive activities and their results, and fully surrender unto Me, I reciprocate by giving them the nectar of immortality, elevating them to become My eternal associates.”

The conclusion is that on the platform of *prema*, Krishna becomes the life, the soul, and the greatest treasure of the devotee. In this stage the sublime exchanges of love between the devotee and the Lord, due to their natural attraction for each other, flowers into full bloom.

Sri Prahlada Maharaja says in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [7.5.14]:

“Just as pieces of iron rush of their own volition to the magnet, similarly, by the independent will of the Supreme Lord, my heart and mind have shaken off their enthrallment to material life and are forcibly being drawn to the magnet of His lotus feet.”

Prema is the only result of Bhakti

This statement establishes the principle of an inherent and eternal relationship between the infinitesimal jiva and the infinite Supreme Lord. This relationship becomes obscured however when the spirit soul turns away from Krishna. But when by good fortune the jiva's consciousness becomes purified, then the eternally mutual relationship between the Lord and the jiva is rejuvenated; just as a clean and shiny piece of iron is



most efficiently magnetic prone. Purification is thus necessary in order to manifest their inherent and eternal relationship; other than this the process of purification has no real function. Therefore the purified jivas who are *sādhakas* of the *prema-dharma*, or the path of loving devotional service to the Supreme Lord, should realize that this path is highly allergic to all other results, save and except *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Lord Krishna Himself substantiates this truth in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [10.32.22]:

“My dear gopis, you have severed all family bindings for My sake. Such an achievement is very rare, even for great philosophers and yogis. Our meetings with each other are completely pure and unblemished. If I wanted to repay the debt that I have incurred by your love, devotion, service and renunciation, even with My immortal body for all eternity, I would be unable. I am obligated to you life after life. You may succeed in acquitting Me of this debt by your gentle and divine demeanor—nay, your sublime love; but I will always remain indebted to you.”

From the Lord's own statement it is clear that in order to please and attract Him, one must love and satisfy His devotees. (Since Krishna feels that He cannot repay the debt He owes His pure devotees, such as the gopis, on account of His default He becomes their property eternally. Therefore although Krishna is the independent Personality of Godhead, He considers Himself a subject to the permission of His devotees, even in the matter of awarding His mercy and bestowing His association. Thus Krishna is approachable only through the mercy of the pure devotees who have already purchased Him with their love.

Separation from the Lord is exultation

Though the phrase *marma-hatām*, 'deeply afflicted in the heart', has been used in this verse, in truth the devotee feels not grief, but exultation.

To emphasize this point, Sri Krishna says in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [10.32.21]:

“O beloved gopis, there is no doubt that for My sake you have disregarded social taboos, Vedic injunctions, even cut yourselves off from your relatives and family members. Your meditation on Me has been single-minded, not thinking at all of your beauty or your nuptial bliss. In order to increase your love for Me I disappeared from your sight. Please do not blame Me for this act of love, because you are as extremely dear to Me as I am to you.”

Another important point in this verse is that, though it speaks of 'giving Me bliss by Your loving embrace', there is no trace of selfish pleasure. In fact, the only thought here is of loving Krishna and giving Him pleasure. Such a statement is therefore very much in conformity with

the true emotions of pure love.

The preeminence of Sri Śikṣāṣṭaka

Let's now discuss in brief the preeminence of these eight verses known as *Śikṣāṣṭaka*. Just how glorious is Srimati Radharani as the personification of Sri Krishna's internal spiritual potency, and how glorious is Her magnificent love? Krishna also desires to know how She alone fully relishes the wonderful qualities in Him, and the happiness She feels when She realizes the sweetness of His love. Longing to fulfil these desires, the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna, in His eternal form of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu the Absolute Divinity of *audārya*, or magnanimity, performs manifold pastimes and savors the loving moods in an exclusive section of Goloka known as Sri Navadvipa-dhama, the highest realm of the Vaikuntha planets and the playground of the Supreme Lord.

The descent of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

Adorned with the ecstatic sentiments and lustrous complexion of Srimati Radharani, Lord Sri Krishna as Chaitanya Mahaprabhu appears on this earth once in a day of Lord Brahma. His most recent descent to the mortal plane occurred in the year 1486 of the Christian era in the West Bengal district of Nadia, in the town of Navadvipa, situated on a river bank purified by the waters of the Mother Ganga. This abode is non different from Vrndavana. The time of His appearance is recorded as a full lunar eclipse on the full-moon night in the month of *Phālguna* (February-March).

Lord Chaitanya's early life

The whole town of Navadvipa was reverberating with the sounds of God's names being chanted, as was the custom during an eclipse. His father was Pandita Jagannatha Misra, and His mother was Srimati Sachidevi. The Lord's childhood was filled with childlike mischievousness and miraculous adventures. His boyhood days were spent in studies. His marriage in youth was a perfect example of upholding Vedic culture, as was His household life. Thereafter He went to Gaya and accepted spiritual initiation in the ten-syllable Gopala mantra from Sripad Ishvara Puri, a great servant of the Lord and torch-bearer of the disciplic succession coming down from Lord Brahma to Madhvacharya. The Lord's wish was to teach the living entities their duty of taking shelter of a self-realized spiritual master, as instructed by the scriptures.

Initiation into love of God

After His return from Gaya He performed congregational chanting of the holy name with His associates and devotees, and inundated all Bengal with the nectarean river that had its source in these ecstatic *kīrtanas*. It was during this time that He flooded Bengal with the nectar of the holy name of God, while



propagating the message of devotional service to the Supreme Lord. At age twenty-four, He received *sannyāsa* initiation from Sripad Kesava Bharati of the Sankara-sampradaya and forever severed all links with home and family life. The next six years found Him journeying on pilgrimage throughout Bengal, Odisha, South India, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh (Mathura, Vrindavana, Prayaga, Kashi), and Bihar (Kaukai, Natshala, Rajmahal). In His travels, He blessed millions of conditioned souls by giving them the highest transcendental pleasure of the holy name and by propagating the science of pure devotion. He refuted all philosophical speculations and conclusions that contradicted the statements of authorized scriptures, and firmly established the unique supra-mundane principle of *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, which He Himself delineated for the first time, and which is the quintessence of the teachings of all four schools of Vaishnava philosophy.

Lord Chaitanya's final pastimes

For the next eighteen years He remained in Jagannatha Puri, where He fulfilled His spiritual desires and relished them in the company of His intimate associates, enjoying the nectar of love of Godhead. He sent self-realized and empowered preachers from among His followers everywhere, to propagate the path of pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord. In this way He inundated all India in the waves of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

While this was taking place, He was busy grooming many of His intimate associates, like Sri Svarupa-damodara, Sri Ramananda Raya, Sri Prabhodananda Saraswati, Sri Rupa Goswami, Sri Sanatana Goswami, Sri Raghunatha dasa Goswami, Sri Gopala Bhatta Goswami, Sri Jiva Goswami, Sri Kavi Karnapura, and others, to write voluminous books revealing the recondite meaning of His teachings. For this purpose He impregnated their hearts with His divine potency. These selfsame teachings He compressed into the eight *Śikṣāṣṭaka* prayers, reaching out to and instructing all levels of devotees. Many times the Lord would immerse Himself in the *rasa*, or ambrosia, of these eight verses, tasting their esoteric conclusions in the association of Srila Svarupa-damodara and Sri Ramananda Raya. Later the verses were discussed in important scriptures like *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

Teachings of Lord Chaitanya

The Supreme Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu on the one hand, taught by His own example how to lead an ideal householder life, enacting transcendental pastime of a householder. On the other hand, He also taught the renunciants and *sannyāsīs* how to uphold the highest standards of devotion and detachment by His own exemplary behavior. These super excellent teachings

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are all contained in the eight verses.

The *Śikṣāṣṭaka* prayers are the essence of all Vedic scriptures for the *rasika-bhakta*, or the pure devotees who relish *rasas*. These prayers, having emanated from the lips of the Supreme Lord Himself, are indeed the Absolute Truth. Hence, they should be read, recited and worshipped daily by sincere and fortunate souls. These prayers should be their constant companion, learnt and taken to heart.

Benediction for those who read Sri Śikṣāṣṭaka

Those surrendered souls who read the Sri *Śikṣāṣṭaka* prayers, which are the nectarean words flowing from the mouth of the Supreme Lord Gauranga, with devotion, will certainly be attracted to the honey from Lord Chaitanya's lotus feet, and like intoxicated bees, plunge into the lily-filled lake of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

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!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

Nityam Bhagavata-sevaya

A Fortnightly E-Magazine for serving Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

Dedicated to

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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Śrī Pāpamocanī Ekādaśī

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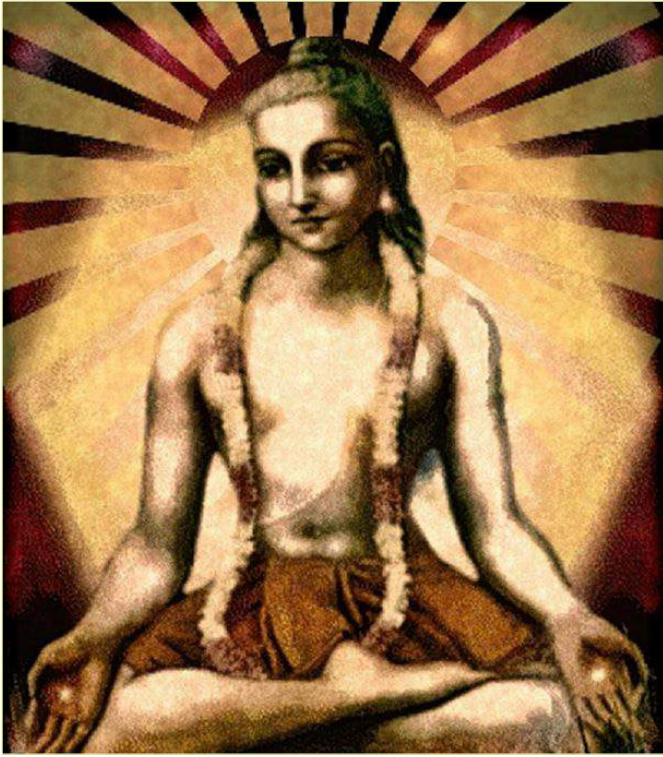
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FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS TO MOTHER DEVAHUTI

Lord Kapila

The Personality of Godhead said: The person who centralizes his household life derives material benefits by performing religious rituals, and thereby he fulfills his desire for economic development and sense gratification. Continuously he acts in the same way. Such persons are ever bereft of devotional service due to being too attached to sense gratification. Therefore, although they perform various kinds of sacrifices and take great vows to satisfy the demigods and forefathers, they are not interested in Krishna consciousness, devotional service. Such materialistic persons, attracted by sense gratification and devoted to the forefathers and demigods, can be elevated to the moon, where they drink an extract of the *soma* plant. Upon the depletion of their piety, they again return to this planet.

The planets which are destination of these materialistic people, including all the heavenly planets, such as the moon, are all destroyed when the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, rests on His serpent bed, Ananta Sesha.

Those who are intelligent and endowed with pure mind are completely satisfied in Krishna consciousness. Freed from the modes of material nature, they do not act for sense gratification. Rather they act as one is expected to act, being situated in their individual occupational duties. By complete purification of consciousness, achieved through executing one's

occupational duties with detachment and without a sense of proprietorship or false ego, one is posted in one's constitutional position. Thus, even by executing so-called material duties he can easily enter into the kingdom of God.

The complete Personality of Godhead, who is the proprietor of the material and spiritual worlds and is the supreme cause of their manifestation and dissolution is approached by such liberated persons following this path of illumination. Those who worship the Hiranyagarbha expansion of the Personality of Godhead, remain in this material world until the end of two *parārdhas*, when Lord Brahma dies.

The material universe, empowered by the three modes of material nature, and covered by layers of earth, water, air, fire, ether, mind, ego, etc., is inhabitable for a period of two *parārdhas*. At the duration of this time period, Lord Brahma closes material universe and goes back to Godhead. The *yogīs* who become detached from the material world by practice of breathing exercises and control of the mind reach the distant planet of Brahma. After giving up their material bodies, they enter into the body of Lord Brahma. Later, when Brahma is liberated and goes to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supreme Brahman, such *yogīs* can also enter into the kingdom of God. Therefore, My dear mother, through devotional service please take direct shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seated in everyone's heart.

My dear mother, even demigods such as Lord Brahma, great sages such as Sanat-kumara and great munis such as Marichi have to come back to the material world again at the time of creation due to their misconceived self-interest. When the interaction of the three modes of material nature begins, Brahma, who is the creator of this cosmic manifestation and who is full of Vedic knowledge, and the great sages, who are the authors of the spiritual path and the yoga system, come back under the influence of the time factor. They are liberated by their non-fruitive activities and they attain the first incarnation of the *puruṣa*. However, at the time of next creation they come back in exactly the same forms and positions as they had previously occupied.

Persons who are addicted to this material world execute their prescribed duties diligently and with great faith. They regularly perform all their prescribed duties with attachment to the result. Due to uncontrolled senses, such persons, impelled by the mode of passion, are full of anxieties and always aspire for sense gratification. They worship the forefathers and busy themselves day and night in improving the economic condition of their family,



social or national life. Such persons are called *trai-vargika* because they are interested in the three elevating processes. Unfortunately, they are averse to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who can give relief to the conditioned soul. They are not interested in His pastimes, which are worth hearing because of His transcendental prowess. Due to their aversion to the Lord, such persons are condemned by His unsurpassable order-carriers. Because they are averse to hearing the nectarine activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they are compared to stool-eating hogs. They give up hearing the transcendental activities of the Lord and instead indulge in hearing the abominable activities of materialistic persons.

Such materialistic persons are allowed to go to the planet called Pitṛloka, situated on the southern section of the sun's path. However, they cannot stay there permanently. They come back to this planet and take birth in their previous families. Then they resume the same fruitive activities as before and continue until the end of their life. This is because when the results of their pious activities are exhausted, they fall down from the higher realms and again come back to this planet just as any person raised to a high position sometimes all of a sudden falls. This takes place by higher arrangement. My dear mother, I therefore advise that you take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for only His lotus feet are meant for to be worshipped. Accept this process with full dedication and love, for thus you can be situated in transcendental devotional service.

Engagement in Krishna consciousness and application of devotional service unto Krishna make it possible to advance in knowledge and detachment, as well as in self-realization. The mind of such an exalted soul becomes equipoised in sensory activities, and he is transcendental to the conceptions of favourable and not favourable. Because of his transcendental intelligence, the soul situated in pure devotion is equipoised in his vision and sees himself to be uncontaminated by matter. He does not see anything as superior or inferior, and he realizes himself as being equal in qualities with the Supreme Person.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead alone is complete transcendental knowledge. According to the different processes of understanding He appears differently, either as impersonal Brahman, as Paramatma, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead or as the *puruṣa-avatāra*. The greatest common understanding of all the practitioners of these different processes is complete detachment from matter, which is ultimately achieved by all of them.

Those who are averse to the Transcendence realize that Supreme Absolute Truth differently through

speculative sense perception. Therefore, because of mistaken speculation, to them, everything appears to be relative. From the total energy, the *mahat-tattva*, the Supreme Lord has manifested the false ego, the three modes of material nature, the five material elements, the individual consciousness, the eleven senses and the material body. In this way, the entire universe has come from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Perfect knowledge of all this can be achieved by a person who is engaged in devotional service with faith, steadiness and full detachment, and who, being aloof from material association, is always absorbed in thoughts of the Supreme.

My dear respectful mother, I have already described the path of understanding the Absolute Truth, by which one can come to understand the real truth of matter, and spirit, and their relationship. Philosophical research culminates in understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After achieving this understanding, when one becomes free from the material modes of nature, he attains the stage of devotional service. Thus the ultimate goal for both methods, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One may achieve this goal by the direct method of devotional service or the indirect method of philosophical research.

A single object is appreciated differently by different senses due to its having different qualities. Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is one, but according to different scriptural injunctions He appears to be different. One who achieves perfection in his transcendental method will realize the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He is represented in the material world as well as in transcendence. These methods are fruitive activities and sacrifices, distributing charity, performing austerities, studying various Vedic literatures, conducting philosophical research, controlling the mind, subduing the senses, accepting the renounced order of life and performing the prescribed duties of one's social order. One may also achieve perfection by following the different divisions of yoga practice, understanding the science of self-realization, developing a strong sense of renunciation, performing devotional service and executing varnashrama dharma with spiritual attachment and material detachment.

My dear mother, I have explained to you the process of devotional service and its identity in four different social divisions and how eternal time is imperceptibly pursuing the living entities. There are various destinations in the material world which the living entity achieves according to the work he performs in ignorance or forgetfulness of his real identity. My dear mother, if anyone enters into that forgetfulness, he is unable to understand where his movements will end.



This instruction is not meant for the envious, the agnostics or those who are unclean in their behavior. Nor is it for hypocrites or those who are proud of material possessions. It is not to be instructed to persons who are greedy, attached to family life, who are not devoted and who are envious of the Personality of Godhead and His devotees. Instruction should be given to the faithful and respectful devotee, the non-envious, those who are friendly to all living entities and those who are eager to render service with faith and sincerity. This instruction should be imparted by the spiritual master to persons who have taken the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the most dear of all, who are not envious of anyone, who are completely purified and who are detached from all that is outside Krishna consciousness.

Anyone who once meditates upon Me with faith and affection, who chants and hears about Me, surely goes back home, back to Godhead.

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—*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 32. Entanglement in Fruitive Activities » Verse: 1 - 43.* ❧

—*From Sārāṁtha Darśinī commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam by Viṣṇvanātha Chakravartī Thākura.* ❧

DEVAHUTI ATTAINS THE SUPREME PERFECTION

Sri Maitreya Ṛṣi

After hearing from Lord Kapila, Mother Devahuti became free from all ignorance. She offered her obeisance and then pleased her son by offering Him the following prayers.

Devahuti said, “My dear Lord, although You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, You have taken birth from my womb. Since the entire creation is contained by Your abdomen at the time of devastation, one may wonder how You could appear before me in this form. It is possible because at the end of the millennium, You lie upon a banyan leaf and in the form of a small baby You lick the toe of Your lotus foot. In other words, You are perfectly free to act in any way You so desire.”

“My dear Lord, to say nothing of the spiritual advancement of those who see You eye to eye, even those who are born in the family of dog-eaters immediately become qualified to perform Vedic sacrifices if they once utter Your holy name, chant Your glories, offer You obeisance, or even remember You. How glorious are those whose tongues are engaged in chanting Your holy name! Even if born in the family of dog-eaters, such persons are worshipable. Such chanters of Your holy name must have already executed all kinds of austerities, performed fire sacrifices, bathed

in all the holy places, studied the Vedas, and achieved all the good manners of the Aryans.”

In response to the glorification of Devahuti, Lord Kapila spoke with satisfaction and gravity, “My dear mother, the path of self-realization I have taught you is very easy, and by following it you will soon become liberated, even while remaining in your present body. In this way, you will ultimately reach Me in My eternal, transcendental abode.”

Having completed the duty of instructing His mother, Lord Kapila took her permission and departed. Devahuti remained in Kardama’s ashrama, where she practiced deep meditation upon the Lord in devotional service. Due to bathing three times daily, her hair gradually turned gray, and because of her severe austerities, her body became thin.

The abode of Kardama, due to its great beauty, was considered to be the flower crown of the River Sarasvati. Because of Kardama’s mystic power, even the demigods in heaven envied his opulence. Inside Kardama’s palace, the couches were made of gold, and the chairs were made of ivory and covered with golden lace cloth. The walls were constructed from first-class marble and inlaid with precious jewels. There was no need for lighting, because the rays of those jewels illuminated everything brightly. Surrounding the household of Kardama were very beautiful gardens that were filled with all varieties of flowers and fruit trees.

When Devahuti enters these gardens to bathe in the lotus ponds, the Gandharvas would sing of Kardama’s glories. In spite of possessing such opulence, Devahuti gave up all bodily comforts and wore only torn cloths. Her only regret - which was transcendental - was that her son had left home, and thus she constantly meditated upon Him in separation.

Following the instructions of Lord Kapila, Devahuti easily gave up all material attachment. Thus attaining purity of heart, she became freed from all material pangs. Blissfully situated in meditative trance, she completely forgot about her material body, just as a person is no longer aware of his body while dreaming.

The Vidyadhara maidens who had been created by Kardama were taking care of Devahuti. She was without any anxiety. Thus she did not become emaciated. Staying at Kardama’s ashrama, known as Siddhapada, Devahuti ultimately achieved the supreme perfection of life, going back home, back to Godhead. The material elements of her body transformed into water which became one of the sacred rivers.

After leaving His mother, Lord Kapila travelled to the northeast. As His journey progressed, the Apsaras, Gandharvas, Caranas, and other celestial beings offered



Him prayers of glorification. Later retracing His steps, Lord Kapila came to Ganga-sagara, where the Ganga reaches the Bay of Bengal. At that place, the ocean personified offered Him a place to reside. To this day, Lord Kapila stays there, absorbed in meditative trance. The acharyas of the Sankhya philosophical system regularly worship Him there.

— Excerpt from a book "Srimad Bhagavatam in story form" by Purnaprajna dasa » Published by Sri Sri Sitaram Seva Trust

DEVAHUTI ATTAINS KAPILA VAIKUNTHA

His Divine Grace

A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

It is understood that Devahuti entered the planet which is called Kapila Vaikuntha. There are innumerable Vaikuntha planets predominated by the expansions of Vishnu. All the Vaikuntha planets are known by a particular name of Vishnu. As we understand from *Brahma-saṁhitā*, *advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam* [Bs. 5.33]. Ananta means "innumerable." The Lord has innumerable expansions of His transcendental form, and according to the different positions of the symbolical representations in His four hands, He is known as Narayana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Vasudeva, etc. There is also a Vaikuntha planet known

as Kapila Vaikuntha, to which Devahuti was promoted to meet Kapila and reside there eternally, enjoying the company of her transcendental son.

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 33. Activities of Kapila » Verse: 30 » Purport by His Divine Grace A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

THE GLORIES OF VAIKUNTHA LOKA

Lord Shiva and Parvati describing
the glories of Vaikuntha to Narada

Sri Sanatana Goswami

Lord Shiva said: In Vaikuntha the residents have *sac-cid-ānanda* bodies and may avail themselves of the supreme opulence of Lord Hari. They have *sac-cid-ānanda* powers, equal to His. But the residents of Vaikuntha do not like to accept such equality with the Lord. They are satisfied simply to worship Lord Hari with devotion. They travel freely wherever they want, protecting and promoting the cause of the Lord's devotees and the Lord's devotional service. Always worshiping the Lord in Vaikuntha, they seem amused by those who are merely liberated. The *Vaikuntha-vāsīs* are always busy in various services, for which they even take on forms like those of birds and trees. They can always see Him in person, Lord Hari, who inspires



everyone's pleasure and whose lotus feet are cared for by the goddess of fortune. Their life in His company is pure joy.

In Vaikuntha nothing exists but devotional service, rendered through *saṅkīrtana* and in many other forms. It goes on incessantly, with great enthusiasm, spreading the ecstasy of pure love. How amazing is that supremely great ocean of transcendental bliss! The bliss of Brahman cannot compare to even a fraction of half a drop of it. That Vaikuntha world, its residents, and everything there are blessed by the mercy of pure love for the lotus feet of Krishna. As recipients of such mercy, the divine residents of Vaikuntha are much greater than I in many ways. How can I adequately describe their glories? Though living within the material world, in bodies composed of the five elements, persons expert in relishing devotional service to the Lord are always worshipable for persons like me. Such expert relishers surrender themselves fully to the lotus feet of Sri Krishna. Hoping to obtain exclusive love for Him, they abandon their wealth, their families, and their very lives. They are not interested in any of the means and ends of success, in this world or the next. They have gone beyond subservience to the rules that apply according to birth, occupation, and spiritual status. Even if they have not repaid their three debts and are therefore transgressing Vedic principles, by the power of their devotion to Lord Hari they are ever fearless. Greedy to taste the pleasure of devotion to Him, they have no desire for anything else. To them liberation, heaven, and hell all appear the same. Truly I tell you, such devotees are as limitlessly dear to me as the Supreme Lord Himself. My highest ambition is to have their company.

In my opinion, dear Narada, anywhere such devotees are found is actually *Vaikuṇṭha-loka*. Arguing against this fact would be useless. Having drunk the nectar of devotion to Krishna, those devotees forget their material bodies and relationships. Thus even while living in material bodies, they assume the transcendental nature of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. But in Vaikuntha devotees always relish ongoing pleasure pastimes in the very company of the Lord. Therefore devotees sometimes prefer to live there. That is why I say that the residents of Vaikuntha are greater than everyone else. As the objects of Krishna's special mercy, they are His most beloved devotees.

Sri Parvati said: Furthermore, among them all, the goddess *Śrī* is famous as especially dear to the Lord. She is indeed the ruling goddess of Vaikuntha and its residents. Her mercy expands wherever she casts Her sidelong glance. Thus the rulers of the various planets obtain their powers, their knowledge, their detachment, and their devotion. Ignoring people like you who

worship Her with great respect, she vowed to undergo severe penances to worship Her beloved Lord, even though He was indifferent to Her. This most perfect of chaste wives resides forever on His beautiful chest and follows Him in all His incarnations.

— From *Śrī Bhṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta* of *Srila Sanatana Goswamī* » Volume 1 » Chapter : 3 » *Prapancatīta: Beyond the Material World* » Verses: 45 - 67 » Translated by *Gopiparanadhana dasa*. Published by *Bhaktivedanta Book Trust*. ॐ

SPIRITUAL WORLD

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur

Is the spiritual world incomplete?

The storehouse of Vaikuntha is always complete. Lord Sri Krishnachandra, the lovable object of all, constantly invites the living entities to come through the open door of that storehouse.

— *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā*, Chapter 9

What is Vraja? What does “Vraja” mean?

The appearance of the truth of Vaikuntha in the pure consciousness of the living entities of this world is called Vraja. The word Vraja means “to go.”

— *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā*, Chapter 5

Is Vaikuntha incomplete and limited?

Sad bhāve 'pi viśeṣasyasarvaṁ tan nitya-dhāmamī.
The splendor of the spiritual abode is established by the quality of variegatedness. Although that splendor is eternal, Vaikuntha is nevertheless non-dual and constitutionally eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. The material world however consists of dualities arising from time, place, and circumstance. Being transcendental to the material creation, Vaikuntha is without duality and fault.

— *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā*, Chapter 1

Are the descriptions about the spiritual world concocted, having been derived from material experience?

*cic-chakti-nirmitaṁ sarvaṁ yad vaikuṇṭhe sanātānam
pratibhātaṁ prapañce 'smiṁ jaḍa-rūpa malānvitam*

Some people try to impose their material ideas on the nature of Vaikuntha and thus they become overwhelmed by prejudices. Later they try to establish their prejudices by shrewd arguments. Their descriptions of Vaikuntha and the pastimes of the Lord are material. These types of conclusions arise only due to improper knowledge of the Absolute Truth. Only those who have not deeply



discussed spiritual topics will have the propensity to rationalize in this way.

The doubtful hearts of the *madhyama-adhikārīs* are always swinging between the material and the spiritual due to their being unable to completely enter into the realm of the Absolute Truth. Actually, the variegatedness seen in the material world is only a perverted reflection of the spiritual world. The difference between the material and spiritual worlds is this: In the spiritual world, everything is blissful and faultless, whereas in the material world everything is a temporary mixture of happiness and distress, and full of impurities arising from time and place. Therefore, the descriptions of the spiritual world are not imitations of those of the material world; rather they are describing the most coveted ideals.

—Śrī Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā, Chapter 1

Are the pastimes, abode, and form of Krishna in the spiritual world imaginary or transcendental?

Actual truth is spiritual truth. Variegatedness is eternally present in it. By this feature the spiritual abode, spiritual form, spiritual name, qualities, and pastimes of Krishna are established. Only those who are self-realized and who have no relationship with *māyā* relish His pastimes. The transcendental world, the abode for performing pastimes, is made of touchstone, and the forms of Krishna are all spiritual.

—Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā 5/27

What is the spiritual world made of? What do the desire trees and *kāmadhenu* give?

Just as *Māyā* builds this mundane universe with the five material elements, so the spiritual (*cit*) potency has built the spiritual world of transcendental gems. The *cintāmaṇi*, which serves as material in the building of the abode of the Supreme Lord of Goloka, is a far rarer and more desirable entity than even the philosopher's stone. The desire-fulfilling trees (*kalpa-vṛkṣa*) in the material world yield only the fruits of piety, wealth, fulfillment of desire and liberation; but those in the abode of Krishna bestow innumerable fruits in the shape of checkered (*parakīya-bhāva*) divine love. Similarly, the *kāma-dhenu* (cows yielding the fulfillment of desire) give milk when they are milked; but the *kāma-dhenu*s of Goloka pour forth oceans of milk in the shape of the fountain of love showering transcendental bliss. That milk does away with the hunger and thirst of all pure devotees.

—Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā 5/29

Can the living entity understand that the

spiritual world exists within the material world but remains untouched by matter?

Poor human understanding cannot possibly make out how the extensive triquadrantal, which is beyond human comprehension, can be accommodated in the limited material universe of a uniuadrantal disclosure. Gokula is a spiritual plane, hence its condescended position in the region of material space, time, etc., is in no way restricted but unlimitedly manifested with its full boundless propriety.

—Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā 5/2

Are all the ingredients of Gokula present in Goloka?

The distinction of paramourship and concubinage, the variegatedness of the respective *rasas* of all different persons, the soil, water, river, hill, portico, bower, cows, etc., all the features of Gokula exist in Goloka and are disposed in an appropriate manner.

—Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā 5/37

What is the difference between the nature of the spiritual world and the material world?

In the transcendental realm there is no past and future but only the unalloyed and immutable present time. In the transcendental sphere there is no distinction between the object and its qualities. There is also no such identity as is found in the limited mundane region. Hence, those qualities that seem to be apparently contradictory in the light of mundane conception limited by time and space, exist in agreeable and dainty concordance in the spiritual realm.

—Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā 5/33

What position do the devotees of different rasas attain in the spiritual world?

In discussing *rasa*, we meet with five kinds of devotion or service: *śānta* or unattached, *dāsyā* or pertaining to reverential willing service, *sakhya* or friendship, *vātsalya* or parental love, and *śṛṅgāra* or juvenile love.

The devotees surcharged with the notion of their respective service, serve Krishna eternally and ultimately reach the goal of those ideals. They attain the real nature of their respective *rasas* in its full glory. They attain conveyances and seats befitting their sacred service. They attain transcendental qualities, which, like ornaments, enhance the beauty of their real nature.

Those who are adherents of *śānta-rasa* attain the region of Brahma-Paramatma, the seat of eternal peace. Those of *dāsyā-rasa* get to Vaikuntha, the spiritual majestic abode of Sri Narayana. Those of *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *śṛṅgāra-rasa* attain *Goloka-dhāma*,



Krishna's abode, above Vaikuntha.

—Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā 5/36

—Daśa-mūla-tattva : The Ten Esoteric Truths of the Vedas by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thākura » Translated by Sriman Sarvabhavana Dasa » Edited by Sriman Keshidamana dasa

HOW CAN WE GO BACK TO GODHEAD?

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur

Lord Sri Hari is the transcendental Absolute Truth situated beyond the material creation. There is no way to meet with that transcendental object, the Supreme Lord, other than to hear about Him. Discussions about Vaikuntha emanating from the lotus mouths of devotees, have extraordinary potency. When these transcendental sound vibrations enter our ears, our consciousness is awakened and we become Krishna conscious. This is because these vibrations descend from Vaikuntha into this world to help us go back to Godhead. Discussions about this material world only help us go to hell.

Sri Chaitanyaacandra came to this world to tell us about the realm of Vaikuntha. However, due to our misfortune, the teachings of this most merciful personality do not enter our ears. Those who are fortunate can understand Mahaprabhu's teachings. If we want to become fortunate, we must develop the propensity to serve. Then Vaikuntha topics and teachings will enter our ears and we will understand them.

We must try to make spiritual advancement from our present position by hearing enlivening discourses from living sources, bona fide Vaishnavas. The moment we stop hearing *hari-kathā* from and real devotees, the moment we stop serving them, the Lord's illusory energy, Maya, will immediately swallow us. Thus it is

our duty to give attention to wherever actual *hari-kathā* is being discussed.

Our constitutional propensity will be revived if we hear *hari-kathā* from a living source through service-inclined ears. Then we will be able to realize or see the Supreme Lord in our purified hearts. We can realize the Supreme Lord only by aural reception. Apart from hearing, there is no way to go back to Godhead.

—From *Amṛta Vāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality* by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura Prabhupāda » Translated from Bengali by Bhumiapati dasa » Adapted and Published by Ishvara dasa (Touchstone Media)

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Daksa, Sati and Lord Shiva



Features

DAKSA CURSES LORD SHIVA

Conversation between Maitreya and Vidura



**REAL REASON FOR THE
ENMITY BETWEEN LORD SHIVA AND DAKSA**
*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupada*



GLORIES OF LORD MAHADEVA
*Conversation between Lord Brahma and
Narada*



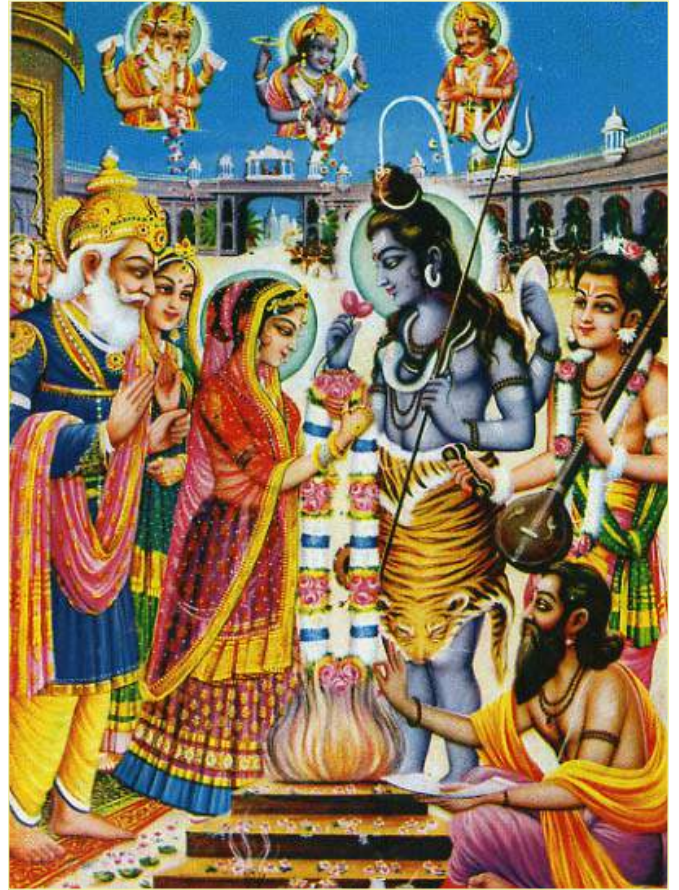
**SATI QUIT'S HER BODY
IN THE ASSEMBLY OF DAKSA**
Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

DAKSA CURSES LORD SHIVA*Conversation between Maitreya and Vidura*

Vidura inquired: Daksa was very affectionate towards his daughter. Then why did he become envious of her husband, Lord Shiva, who is the best among the gentle? Why did he neglect his daughter Satī? Lord Shiva, the spiritual master of the entire world, is free from enmity, is a peaceful personality, and is always satisfied in himself. He is the greatest among the demigods. How is it possible that Daksa could be inimical towards such an auspicious personality? My dear Maitreya, to part with one's life is very difficult. Would you kindly explain to me how this son-in-law and father-in-law could quarrel so bitterly that the great goddess Satī gave up her life?

The sage Maitreya said: In a previous millennium, the leaders of the universal creation performed a great sacrifice which was attended by all the great sages, philosophers, demigods and fire-gods and their followers. When Daksa, the leader of the *prajāpatis*, entered that assembly, his personal bodily luster as bright as the effulgence of the sun. The entire assembly hall was illuminated, and everyone there appeared insignificant in his presence. Influenced by his personal bodily luster, all the fire-gods and other participants there - with the exceptions of Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva - gave up their seats and stood in respect. Daksa was appropriately welcomed by the president of the great assembly, Lord Brahma. After paying due respect to Lord Brahma, Daksa was invited to take his seat. Before doing so, Daksa saw the seated Lord Shiva who was not visibly showing him any respect and became offended. Daksa became very angry and his eyes became red. He thus began to speak very strongly against Lord Shiva.

All sages, *brāhmaṇas* and fire-gods present, please hear me with attention, for I speak about the manners of gentle persons. I do not speak out of ignorance or envy. Shiva has spoiled the name and fame of the governors of the universe and has polluted the path of gentle manners. Because he is shameless, he does not know how to act. He has already accepted himself as my subordinate by marrying my daughter in the presence of fire and *brāhmaṇas*. He has married my daughter, who is equal to Gayatri, and has pretended to be just like an honest person. He has eyes like a monkey, yet he married my daughter, who has eyes like a deer cub. Nevertheless he did not stand up to receive



me, nor did he think it is fit to welcome me with sweet words.

I had no desire to give my daughter to this person, who has broken all rules of civility. By not observing the required rules and regulations, he is impure, however, I was obliged to give the hand of my daughter in marriage to him just like a learned scholar teaches the messages of the Vedas to a *śūdra*.

Shiva lives in filthy places like crematoriums, and his companions are the ghosts and demons. Naked like a madman, sometimes laughing and sometimes crying, he smears ashes from the crematorium all over his body. He does not bathe regularly, and he ornaments his body with a garland of skulls and bones. Therefore only in name is he Shiva (auspicious); actually, he is mad and the most inauspicious personality. Thus he is very dear to crazy beings in the gross mode of ignorance. He is their leader. On the request of Lord Brahma I handed over my chaste daughter to him, although he is devoid of all cleanliness and his heart is filled with nasty things.

Thus Daksa, seeing Lord Shiva sitting as if against him, washed his hands and mouth and cursed him in the following words: 'The demigods are eligible to share in the oblations of sacrifice, but



Lord Shiva, who is the lowest of all the demigods, shall not receive a share’.

My dear Vidura, in spite of the requests of all the members of the sacrificial assembly, Daksa, in great anger, cursed Lord Shiva and then left the assembly and went back to his home. Upon understanding that Lord Shiva had been cursed, Nandishvara, one of Lord Shiva's principal associates, became very angry. His eyes became red. He prepared to curse Daksa and all the *brāhmaṇas* who were present there and tolerated Daksa cursing Shiva with harsh words.

Anyone who has accepted Daksa as the most important personality and neglected Lord Shiva because of envy is less intelligent and will be bereft of transcendental knowledge. Pretentiously religious householder life, in which one is attracted to material happiness and thus attracted to the superficial explanation of the Vedas, robs one of all intelligence and attaches to fruitive activities as all in all. Daksa has accepted the body as all in all. Therefore, since he has forgotten the *viṣṇu-pāda*, or *viṣṇu-gati*, and is attached to only sex life, within a short time he will have the face of a goat.

Those who have become as dull as matter by cultivating materialistic education and material intelligence are nesciently involved in fruitive activities. Such men have purposely insulted Lord Shiva. May they continue in the cycle of repeated birth and death. May those who are envious of Lord Shiva, being attracted by the flowery language of the enchanting Vedic promises, and who have thus become dull, always remain attached to fruitive activities. These *brāhmaṇas* take to education, austerity and vows only for the purpose of maintaining the body. They shall be devoid of discrimination between what to eat and what not to eat. They will acquire money, begging from door to door, simply for the satisfaction of the body.

When all the hereditary *brāhmaṇas* were thus cursed by Nandishvara, the sage Bhṛigu, as a reaction, condemned the followers of Lord Shiva with a very strong brahminical curse: One who takes a vow to satisfy Lord Shiva or who follows such principles will certainly become an atheist. He will be diverted from transcendental scriptural injunctions. Those who vow to worship Lord Shiva are so foolish that they imitate him by keeping long hair on their heads. When initiated into worship of Lord Shiva, they prefer to live on wine, flesh and other such impure things.

Bhṛigu Muni continued: Since you blaspheme the *Vedas* and the *brāhmaṇas*, who are followers

of the Vedic principles, it is understood that you have already taken shelter of the doctrine of atheism. The *Vedas* give the eternal regulative principles for auspicious advancement in human civilization and have been rigidly followed in the past. The strong evidence of this principle is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is called Janardana, the well-wisher of all living entities. By blaspheming the principles of the *Vedas*, which are the pure and supreme path of the saintly persons, certainly you followers of Bhutapati, Lord Shiva, will descend to the standard of atheism without any doubt.

The sage Maitreya said: When such cursing and counter-cursing was going on between Lord Shiva's followers and the parties of Daksa and Bhṛigu, Lord Shiva became very sad. Not saying anything, he left the arena of the sacrifice, followed by his disciples. O Vidura, all the progenitors of the universal population thus executed a sacrifice for thousands of years, for sacrifice is the best way to worship the Supreme Lord, Hari, the Personality of Godhead. My dear Vidura, carrier of bows and arrows, all the demigods who were performing the sacrifice took their bath at the confluence of the Ganges and the Yamuna after completing the *yajña* performance. Such a bath is called *avabhṛtha-snāna*. After thus becoming purified in heart, they departed for their respective abodes.

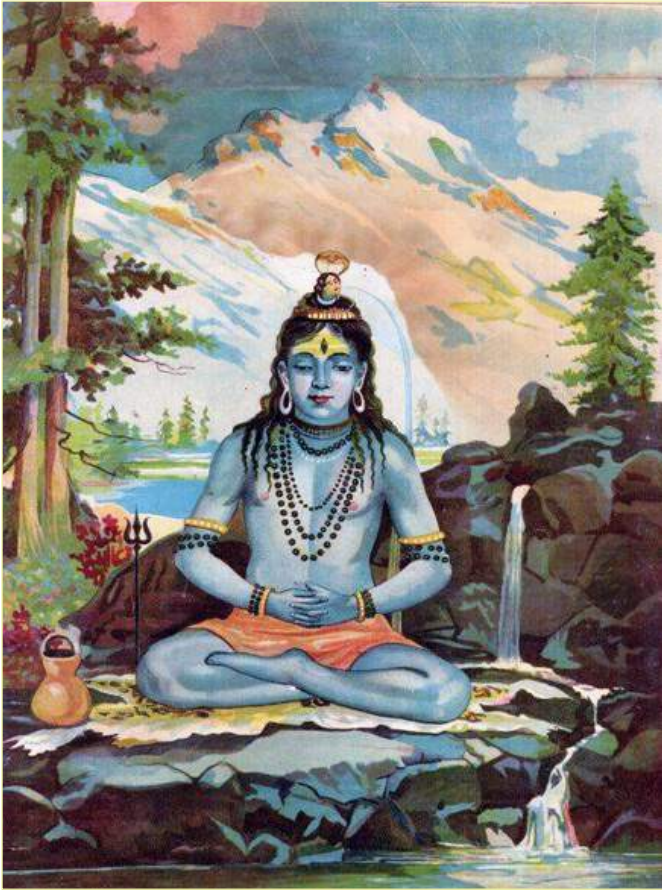
—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter: 2. Daksa Curses Lord Shiva » Verse: 1-35

REAL REASON FOR THE ENMITY BETWEEN LORD SHIVA AND DAKSA

His Divine Grace

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Daksa was envious of Lord Shiva because of Shiva's high position as a *guṇa-avatāra* (incarnation of a quality) of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and Shiva was directly in contact with the Supersoul and was therefore honored and given a better sitting place than Daksa. There were also many other reasons. Daksa, being materially puffed up, could not tolerate the high position of Lord Shiva. So his anger at Lord Shiva for not standing up in his presence was only the final manifestation of his envy. Lord Shiva is always in meditation and always perceives the Supersoul, as expressed by the words *pūruṣa-buddhi-sākṣiṇām*. The position of one whose intelligence is always absorbed in meditation upon the Supreme Personality of



Godhead is very great and cannot be imitated by anyone, especially an ordinary person. When Daksa entered the arena of *yajña*, Lord Shiva was in meditation and might not have seen Daksa enter, but Daksa took the opportunity to curse him because Daksa had maintained an envious attitude towards Lord Shiva for a long time. Those who are actually self-realized see every individual body as a temple of the Supreme Personality of Godhead because the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His Paramatma feature, is residing in everyone's hearts.

When one offers respect to another, it is not to the material body but to the presence of the Supreme Lord. Thus one who is always in meditation upon the Supreme Lord is always offering Him obeisances. Since Daksa was not very elevated, he thought that obeisances were offered to the material body. Since Lord Shiva did not respect his material body, Daksa thus became angry. Persons such as Daksa, being unable to rise to the standard of self-realized souls like Lord Shiva, are always envious.

The example given here is very suitable. Asuras, demons or atheists, are always envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; they simply want to kill Him. Even in this age we find some so-called scholars who are envious of Krishna

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

commenting on *Bhagavad-gītā*. When Krishna says, *man-manā bhava mad-bhaktah* (Bg. 18.65)—"Always think of Me, become My devotee, and surrender unto Me"—the so-called scholars comment that it is not to Krishna that we have to surrender. That is envy. The asuras or atheists, the demons, without reason or cause, are envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Similarly, instead of offering respect to self-realized persons, foolish men who cannot approach the highest standard of self-realization are always envious, although there is no reason.

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » SB 4.3: Talks Between Lord Shiva and Satī » Verse: 21 » Purport by His Divine Grace A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada ❧

GLORIES OF LORD MAHADEVA

Conversation between Lord Brahma and Narada

Lord Brahma said: Mahadeva Shiva is famous as the dear friend of Lord Krishna. He is always intoxicated by the taste of service to Sri Krishna's lotus feet. He therefore has no interest in any of the normal goals of life, even up to rulership of the universe and the sense enjoyment such rulership provides. As if ridiculing materialists like me, who are simply addicted to sense enjoyment, he goes around naked, wearing garlands of *dhustūra*, *arka*, and bones. He smears ashes all over his body. With his matted locks scattered around, he moves aimlessly like a madman. Yet he is unable to conceal his glories. With joy, he carries on his head the Ganga, born from the water that washed Krishna's lotus feet. When he dances he destroys the universe. By Krishna's grace, Lord Shiva and his wife are able to award liberation to candidates like me who eagerly want it. Indeed, everyone who lives on Lord Shiva's planet is liberated. By his mercy, so many persons have become liberated souls and even pure devotees of Krishna. To consider Lord Shiva different from Krishna is a serious spiritual deviation. The Personality of Godhead tolerates offenses against Himself but not against Lord Shiva.

When Maya, the master of Tripura, grew intoxicated with pride by Lord Shiva's benediction and placed Lord Shiva in danger, and when Lord Shiva was troubled by other demons, like Vrikasura, the Supreme Lord saved him and encouraged him with nectarean words. And sometimes, to broadcast Lord Shiva's glories, Lord Kṛṣṇa takes the role of his subordinate and worships him with



intimate devotion.

For example, although Krishna was personally present at the churning of nectar from the Milk Ocean, He and the rulers of the universe chose to worship Lord Shiva, the life and soul of Gauri. Lord Shiva collected and drank the terrible poison, which thereafter became his ornament. He was then ceremonially bathed in the presence of everyone assembled and was glorified with floods of praise. The *Purāṇas* sing of Lord Hari's compassion toward Lord Hara. You surely know all this and more, O thoughtful sage. To recall these glories, you need only exercise your memory.

Kuvera once earned the gratitude of Lord Shiva by devotedly worshiping him. From then on, within this universe, Lord Shiva has submitted to Kuvera's authority, on Kuvera's Mount Kailasa. Lord Shiva, the husband of Uma, lives there as the guardian of Kuvera's side of the heavenly sphere. Accompanied by suitable attendants, he shows but a small fraction of his opulence. Just as the Personality of Godhead Krishna, brought under control by the devotion of servants like me, resides on my planet, and in heaven and elsewhere, Lord Shiva lives in Kailasa, displaying suitable pastimes.

Now let me tell you the opinion of the *Vāyu Purāṇa*: The abode of Sri Mahadeva lies outside the seven coverings of the universe. Eternal and full of happiness, that abode is absolutely real. It can be

attained by the best of Lord Shiva's servants. There Lord Shiva, served by the most excellent regalia, reveals himself in his full splendor, surrounded by companions who share opulence and beauty equal to his. As his personal Deity he worships Lord Sankarsana, who is non-different from himself.

— From *Śrī Brhad Bhāgavatāmṛta* of Śrīla Sanātana Goswamī » Volume 1 » Chapter : 2. *Dhīya: In Heaven* » Verses: 80 - 98 » Translated by Gopiparanadhana dasa. Published by Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. ❧

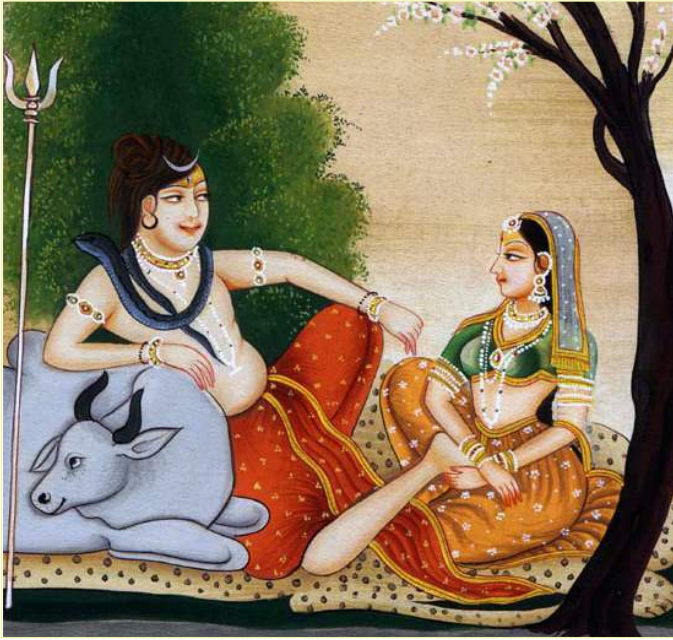
SATI QUILTS HER BODY IN THE ASSEMBLY OF DAKSA

Śrīla Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

Considerable time passed as the father-in-law and son-in-law continued their enmity. When Daksa was appointed by Brahma to be the chief of all the *prajāpatīs*, who were the progenitors of population, he became proud. Daksa, performing a sacrifice named *vājapeya*, then began the best of sacrifices called *brhaspati-sava*, surpassing the followers of Shiva. At that sacrifice all the *brahmarṣīs*, *devarṣīs*, *Pitṛs* and *devatās* were present along with their wives. They were worshipped, and then they worshipped along with their wives.

Hearing from the mouth of the gossiping Khecaras in the sky about the great sacrifice being held by her father, and seeing near her house the wives of the upadevas, with darting eyes, fine cloth, attractive earrings and *niṣkas* on their throats, mounted on their airplanes, going there from all directions along with their husbands, she spoke with longing to her husband, lord of the ghosts.

Sati said: A great sacrifice has been undertaken by your father-in-law Daksa. Since the *devatās* are going there, let us also go there, my noble lord! This is my request. My sisters along with their husbands will certainly go to the sacrifice. Desiring to see my friends, I also desire to accept gifts offered by my parents along with you. O Shiva! Filled with longing for a long time, I desire to see my sisters and their husbands, my aunts and my mother, who has great affection for me in her heart, and to see the best among all sacrifices performed by great sages, like a flag among sacrifices. O Shiva! Such attachment would be astonishing to see in you. But the whole universe, composed of the three *guṇas*, is made by the Lord's *māyā*. Moreover I am a woman, and furthermore do not know the truth about you. O Shiva! Being so unfortunate, I desire to see my birth place. O Shiva, without material conditioning! See also other ornamented women, going in groups with their husbands. O



Shiva with a blue throat! The sky is decorated with their flying airplanes, white like swans. Best of the *devatās*! Hearing of a festival in her father's house, how can the body of the daughter not be stirred to see it? Though uninvited, people go to the house of a friend, husband, father-in-law or father. Please grant my desire, O lord! Since you are merciful you should do this. Being full of knowledge, you have accepted my as half of your body. Therefore, being requested, please oblige me.

Maitreya said: Addressed in this way by his wife, Shiva, replied with a smile, by reminding his wife of the heart-piercing arrows of insults which Daksa spoke in the presence of the creators of the universe.

Shiva said: Dear wife! What you have said is correct. Uninvited, friends generally go to their friends' houses. This is ofcourse only if those friends do not see faults because of anger or strong pride, caused by identification with the body. When discrimination is lost by the six qualities of the saintly, such as knowledge, austerity, wealth, body, youth and family—which become faults in the demons—when people become blinded by pride, nourished by those qualities, and become callous, they do not see the glory of great souls.

One should not go to the houses of persons who have disturbed minds, who will look at the guests with crooked mind, raised brows and angry glances, too abrupt while considering them to be relatives. Even though injured in the limbs by arrows fired by enemies, one does not suffer much and can sleep. However, injured by harsh words uttered by relatives of crooked mind, one suffers day and night with distressed heart.

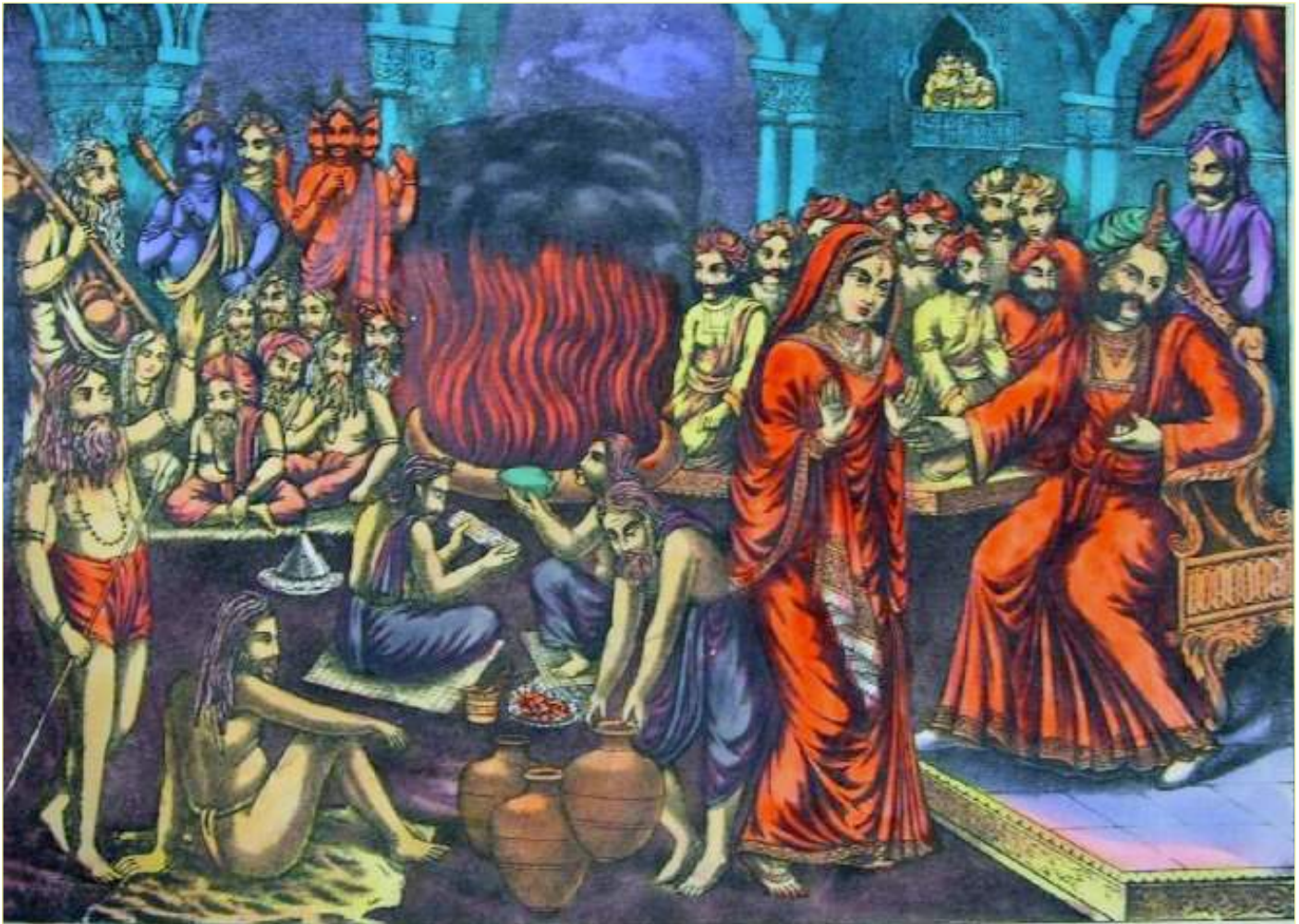
O beautiful-eyed wife! It is clear that you are the favorite of Daksa among all his daughters because of your excellent qualities. That is my opinion. However, your father will not respect you since he is tormented by your relationship with me. His senses are suffering and heart is burning because of the powers of persons like me, who have the Lord as the witness of my intelligence. Daksa is unable to attain such a high position, and thus hates me just as demons hate the Lord.

O thin-waisted wife! Rising from one's seat, acting affectionately and offering mutual respects should actually be done by the wise. This has to be done with the thought that one is offering respects to the Supreme Lord dwelling in the heart of the other person, not to the person's body. The pure *antaḥ-karaṇa* is called Vasudeva, because there the Supreme Lord appears without coverings. In that *antaḥ-karaṇa*, I worshipped the Supreme Lord Vasudeva, beyond the material senses, by offering respects.

Dear wife! Therefore you should not go to see your father Daksa and his followers who are envious of me. Though I was innocent, he scolded me with harsh words when I went to the sacrifice of the creators of the universe. Please mark the point. If you ignore my words and nevertheless go there, it will not be auspicious. When a respectable person is humiliated by a relative, that humiliation will immediately result in death.

Maitreya said: Shiva became silent understanding that Sati would be destroyed whether he prevented her from going or not. Sati became ambivalent: desiring to see her relatives, she went out and remembering Shiva's warning, she came back. Sati was so upset that her body was shaking. She was angry for being blocked in her desire to see her relatives and sad for not being able to meet them. She glared at the un-equalled Shiva as if to burn him up to ashes. Shiva is dear to the saintly persons. As an affectionate husband, it is said that he gave half of his body to his beloved wife. Yet, bewildered by her womanly nature, Sati left his company and went to her father's house with haste.

Rather than allowing Sati to go there unaccompanied, the associates of Shiva spontaneously made a procession. They placed her on the bull Nandi who walked in front of that procession which comprised of thousands of Shiva's followers headed by Manimat and Mada, their assistants and Yaksas. They then placed in her hands a sarika bird, a ball, a mirror, a lotus, white



umbrella, fan, and garland. She was accompanied by the singing of songs and music of flute, conch and drums. In this splendid manner, they proceeded to Daksa's house.

Sati entered the sacrificial arena, made glorious by the chanting of the hymns of the *Vedas* and Vedic sacrifices which was attended by *brahmarṣis* and *devatās*, and filled with vessels made of clay, wood, iron, gold, darbha grass and hide. Out of fear of Daksa, none of the people received her when she arrived, except her mother and sisters. With love and tears of affection, they embraced her in joy, though she had not been respected by others. Because of not being welcomed by her father, Sati did not accept the seat, gifts and worship offered with respect by her mother and sisters. Nor did she accept her sisters' suitable talk and questions.

Seeing the sacrifice devoid of any offering to Shiva, and understanding that the disrespect for her in the assembly was disrespect to her lord Shiva, she became angry, as if she would burn all the worlds. By her command she stopped the ghosts who were ready to kill Daksa. Then heard by the whole universe, with words choked by anger, she

condemned Daksa, enemy of Shiva, who was proud of his efforts at sacrifice.

Sati said: Who except Daksa would hate Shiva, who is without an enemy, the cause of the universe and the soul of beings. There is none in this world superior to him. He neither hates nor favors anyone. O *brāhmaṇas*, saintly persons see that faults are capable of being transformed into good qualities, and thus only see good qualities, not faults. You however, are the opposite of that. The best persons magnify even the smallest good qualities in others. Yet you see only their faults.

The materialists, taking the gross body to be the soul, are envious of and constantly criticize the devotees. Thus they surprisingly become deprived of their powers by the dust from the feet of those devotees. The glory of that criticism is that it diminishes their position. You are so inauspicious that you hate Shiva, whose order cannot be avoided, whose fame is pure, and whose name consisting of two syllables, chanted even once, even inattentively, immediately destroys all men's sins. You have offended the friend of the universe, whose lotus feet are worshipped by the bee-like minds of the great souls who desire the honey of

Brahma's bliss, and who also fulfills the desires of people desiring material gain. Do Brahma and others know as inauspicious Shiva, who has scattered hair, lives in the crematorium, with ghosts, wears the discarded garlands, ashes and human skulls for decorations? Rather they carry on their heads the water used to wash his feet. When a protector or master of religion, is insulted by uncontrollable people, one should leave that place, blocking one's ears, if he cannot kill the person, or give up is life. Alternatively, he should forcibly cut the tongue of the offenders who speak badly and then give up his life. That is the correct procedure. Therefore I shall not maintain this body produced by you, who have criticized Lord Shiva. It is said that the purification for eating poisonous food by mistake is to vomit it. The great sages whose minds are fixed in the self do not follow the standard rules of the scripture, since they are beyond those rules, just as the path or dharma of the *devatās* is different from that of humans. Therefore, situated in one's own dharma, one should not criticize the dharma of others. That is the rule.

Discerning that both the path of enjoyment and the path of renunciation are valid, since they are prescribed in the *Vedas* for people of different qualifications. Thus one should not try to walk both paths, for it is contradictory. However, those who are fixed on the spiritual platform (Brahman), like Shiva follow neither path. O father, you do not have the opulence that we possess. Great personalities like ourselves cannot be flattered by sacrifices, by the path of karma, by filling the belly with food, or by nourishing the *prāṇas*. These invisible powers are available only to those beyond material enjoyment. My low-born body is completely useless, since it comes from the body of a person who offended Shiva. I am humiliated by being associated with you. Thus my birth as the daughter of an offender of Shiva is condemned. When Shiva mentions my relationship to you by calling me daughter of Dakṣa (*Dākṣāyaṇī*), I immediately become depressed in spirits and my smile disappears. Therefore, I shall give up this body born from you.

Maitreya said: O Vidura! After speaking to Dakṣa, Sati sipped water for purification. She then sat down on the ground facing north, dressed in yellow garments. Closing her eyes, she began to perform yoga. Sitting in the proper *āsana*, the pure Sati merged *prāṇa* and *apāna* into one, with the *samāna* air, at the navel chakra and then raised it with the *udāna* from the navel chakra, and fixed it in the heart with the intelligence. Then bringing it through the throat, she slowly led it to the center of



her eyebrow. Desiring to give up that body which the glorious and worshippable Shiva had repeatedly put on his lap with great respect, Sati, with anger directed to Dakṣa, controlled her mind and began to meditate on fire and air in her limbs. She then meditated with fixed attention on the sweet lotus feet of her husband, the guru for the universe. Thus that body which was identified as the daughter of Dakṣa burst into flames and was destroyed by the fire of *samādhi*.

— From *Sārāṇtha-darśinī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by Śrīla Viṣṇuānātha Cakravartī Thākura » Translation by His Holiness Bhaṇu Swamī

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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Dedicated to

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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Quotations from the books, letters, and lectures of

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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Śrī Varuthinī Ekādaśī

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Daksa, Sati and Lord Shiva - Part 2



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WHAT CAUSED SATI TO DESTROY HER BODY?

His Divine Grace

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

LORD SHIVA'S MERCY ON DAKSA

Sriman Purnaprajna Dasa

VIRABHADRA BEHEADS DAKSA

Conversation between Maitreya and Vidura

RE-BIRTH OF SATI AND DAKSA

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur

WHAT CAUSED SATI TO DESTROY HER BODY?*His Divine Grace**A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

The main reason for Sati giving up her body was that her father Daksa disrespected her husband Lord Shiva by performing a sacrifice without inviting him. Although any sacrifice is supposedly intended to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vishnu, generally when a sacrifice is performed, all the demigods, like Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva are invited. It is also customary to invite the other principal demigods such as Indra and Chandra. It is said that unless all the demigods are present, no sacrifice is complete. However, in the tension between the father-in-law and son-in-law, Daksa began a sacrificial performance, to which Lord Shiva was not even invited. Daksa was the chief progenitor employed by Lord Brahma. He was also a son of Brahma. Thus he held a respectable position. However, this simply resulted in him becoming proud.

Daksa was under the impression that he was exalted in both prestige and opulence. He regretted that he had offered his daughter to a person, who in his opinion, was not only poor but devoid of culture. Daksa may have opined that, although she was a chaste woman dedicated to her husband, her husband was in a pathetic condition and was no longer worthy of her respect.

To counteract such thoughts, Sati stated that the opulence possessed by her husband could not be understood by materialistic persons like Daksa and his followers who were flatterers and were engaged in fruitive activities. Her husband was different to them. He possessed all kind of opulences which could be displayed simply by his willing. However, he was not habituated to exhibit them. Therefore such opulence are called *avyakta*, or unmanifested. The opulence Lord Shiva possessed is in the realm of renunciation and love of God, and certainly not a material exhibition intended for sense gratification methods. Such opulences are possessed by spiritually exalted personalities like the Kumaras, Narada and Lord Shiva and not others.

Sati wanted to impress upon her father that he should not think her husband to be unqualified. Sati, being the devoted wife of Lord Shiva, offers all kinds of material opulence to those who worship her husband. Lord Shiva's worshipers sometimes appear more opulent than the worshipers of



Lord Vishnu. This is because Durga, or Sati - the superintendent of the material energy - in order to glorify her husband, offers all material opulence to the worshipers of Lord Shiva. However, the worshipers of Vishnu are blessed with spiritual elevation, and therefore their material opulence is sometimes found to decrease.

Shambhu, Lord Shiva, is the greatest of all devotees of Lord Vishnu. Sati has described that Lord Shiva is always in a transcendental position because he is situated on the pure Vasudeva platform. Vasudeva is that state from which Krishna, *Vāsudeva*, is born. Thus Lord Shiva is the greatest devotee of Lord Krishna. Sati's behavior here is exemplary because no one should tolerate blasphemy against Lord Vishnu or His devotee.

Sati was not aggrieved for her personal association with Lord Shiva. Conversely, because her body was related with Daksa, who is an offender to Lord Shiva's lotus feet, she felt herself to be condemned. Due to remembrance of this relationship, her body was always a source of unhappiness and thus Sati decided to give it up.

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » SB 4.3: Talks Between Lord Shiva and Sati » Verse: 1, 21, 22, 23 » Purport by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. ॐ

VIRABHADRA BEHEADS DAKSA*Conversation between Maitreya and Vidura*

When the angered Sati gave up her body, there was a tumultuous roar from all over the universe. How is it that Sati, the wife of the most respected demigod, Lord Shiva, quit her body in such a manner?

It was astonishing that Daksa, who was *prajāpati*, the maintainer of all living entities, was so disrespectful to his own daughter. Sati was not only a chaste wife but was also a great personality, yet she gave up her body because of his neglectful behavior. Daksa is so hardhearted that he is unworthy to be a *brāhmaṇa*. He will gain extensive ill fame for three reasons: 1) his offenses to his qualified daughter, 2) his failure to prevent her death, and 3) his envy towards the greatest devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

While those gathered for the sacrifice were talking about the shocking death of Sati, those who accompanied Sati prepared themselves to kill Daksa. Raising their weapons, they came forward aggressively. Bhṛigu Muni saw the danger in their threatening advances. Offering oblations into the southern side of the sacrificial fire, he hastily uttered mantric hymns from the *Yajur Veda* by which the destroyers of *yajñic* performances would be killed.

When Bhṛigu Muni thus offered oblations to the fire, many thousands of demigods named *Ṛbhū*s immediately manifested. All of them were powerful, having achieved strength from Soma, the Moon-God. When the *Ṛbhū* demigods attacked the ghosts and Guhyakas with half-burned fuel from the *yajña* fire, all the attendants of Sati fled in different directions and disappeared. This was possible simply because of *brahma-tejas*, brahminical power.

When Lord Shiva heard from Narada that his wife Sati is now dead because of *prajāpati* Daksa's insult to her and his soldiers had been driven away by the *Ṛbhū* demigods, he became terribly angry. Thus the furious Lord Shiva bit his lip with his teeth and plucked a strand of hair from his head which then blazed like fire. He stood up at once, laughing like a madman, and dashed the hair to the ground. A terrifying black demon, as high as the sky and as bright as three suns combined, was thereby created. His teeth were very dreadful and his hair blazed like fire. He had thousands of arms equipped with various weapons, and he was garlanded with human skulls. Approaching Lord Shiva with



Lord Shiva and Virabhadra

folded hands, that gigantic demon asked, "What shall I do, my Lord?". Lord Shiva, who is known as Bhutanatha, immediately ordered, "Because you are the embodiment of my power, you are the foremost of all my associates. Therefore, I order you to kill Daksa and all his soldiers at the sacrifice."

That black demon called Virabhadra, was the personified anger of Lord Shiva. He was also prepared to execute anything ordered of him. Considering himself invincible, he departed after circumambulating Lord Shiva. Many other soldiers of Lord Shiva followed him making a tumultuous uproar. Virabhadra carried a great trident, fearful enough to kill even death, and on his legs he wore bangles which seemed to roar.

At that time, all the people assembled in the sacrificial arena - the priests, the chief of the sacrificial performance, the *brāhmaṇas* and their wives - wondered why did it suddenly become so dark. Upon discussion, they understood that it was a dust storm and in their hearts they felt dread. Conjecturing on the origin of the storm, they said: There is no wind blowing, no cows are passing, nor is it possible that this dust storm could be raised by plunderers, due to the presence of the powerful King Barhi, who would punish them. Where is this dust storm blowing from? Is the dissolution of the planet now to occur?

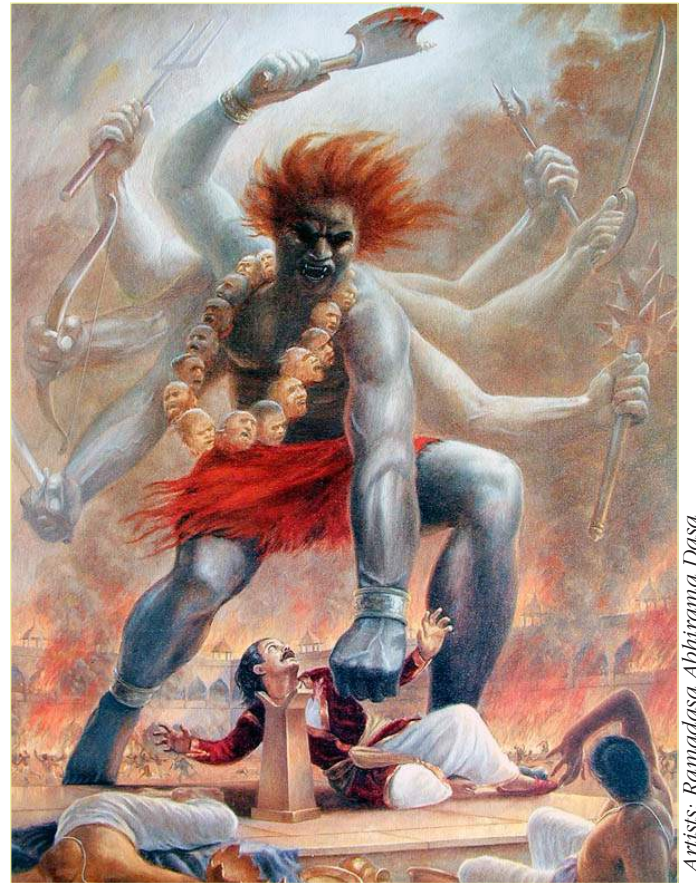
Prasuti, the wife of Daksa, and the other assembled women, became very anxious and said: This danger is caused by Daksa because the faultless Sati quit her body even in the presence of her sisters. In appreciation of the prowess of Lord Shiva, she told how at the time of dissolution, Lord Shiva's hair is scattered, and he pierces the rulers of the different directions with his trident. He laughs and dances proudly, scattering their hands like flags, as thunder scatters the clouds all over the world.

The gigantic Virabhadra bared his fearful teeth. By the movements of his brows he scattered the luminaries all over the sky, and covered them with his strong, piercing effulgence. Because of the misbehavior of Dakṣa, even Lord Brahma, Dakṣa's father, could not have been saved from Virabhadra's exhibition of anger. While all the people talked amongst themselves, Dakṣa saw dangerous omens from all sides, from the earth and from the sky. All the followers of Lord Shiva surrounded the arena of sacrifice. They were of short stature, were equipped with various kinds of weapons and their bodies appeared to be like those of sharks, blackish and yellowish. They ran through the sacrificial arena creating havoc and wrecking destruction.

Some of the soldiers pulled down the pillars which were supporting the tent made for the sacrifice, some of them entered the female quarters, some began destroying the sacrificial arena, and some entered the kitchen and the residential quarters. They broke all the pots made for use in the sacrifice, and some of them began to extinguish the sacrificial fire. Some tore down the boundary wall of the sacrificial arena, and some passed urine on the arena. Some blocked the way of the fleeing sages, some threatened the women assembled there, and some arrested the demigods who were fleeing the sacrificial arena. There was a continuous shower of stones, and all the priests and other members assembled at the sacrifice were put into immense misery. For fear of their lives, they dispersed in different directions.

Maniman, one of the followers of Lord Shiva, arrested Bhrigu Muni, and Virabhadra, the black demon, arrested *prajāpati* Dakṣa. Another follower, Candeshā, arrested Pusa and Nandishvara arrested the demigod Bhaga. Virabhadra then tore off the mustache of Bhrigu, who was offering the sacrificial oblations with his hands in the fire. Virabhadra immediately caught Bhaga, who had been moving his eyebrows during Bhrigu's cursing of Lord Shiva, and out of great anger thrust him to the ground and forcibly put out his eyes.

Just as Baladeva knocked out the teeth of Dantavakra, the King of Kalinga, during the gambling match at the marriage ceremony of Aniruddha, Virabhadra knocked out the teeth of both Dakṣa and Pusa. This was in retaliation of Dakṣa showing his teeth while cursing Lord Shiva, and Pusa's broad sympathetic smirk while this took place. Then the giant Virabhadra sat on the



chest of Dakṣa and tried to cut off his head, but was unsuccessful. He tried to cut off the head of Dakṣa with hymns as well as weapons, but found it impossible to even cut his skin. Thus Virabhadra was exceedingly bewildered.

Then Virabhadra saw the wooden device that is used to kill the animals for the sacrifice. He made use of this device to behead Dakṣa. Upon seeing the action of Virabhadra, the party of Lord Shiva was pleased and cried out joyfully. All the bhūtas, ghosts and demons that had come simultaneously made a tumultuous sound. On the other hand, the *brāhmaṇas* in charge of the sacrifice cried out in grief at the death of Dakṣa. Virabhadra then took his head and with great anger threw it into the southern side of the sacrificial fire, offering it as an oblation. In this way the followers of Lord Shiva devastated the sacrificial arena. After setting the whole place on fire, they departed for their master's abode, Kailash.

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » SB 4.4. Sati Quits Her Body » Verse: 28-34 and SB 4.5. Frustration of the Sacrifice of Dakṣa » Verse: 1-26,





LORD SHIVA'S MERCY ON DAKSA

Sriman Purnaprajna Dasa

Having been defeated and injured by Lord Shiva's soldiers, the *brāhmaṇas* and demigods went to take shelter of Lord Brahma. After offering their obeisance to the Grandsire, they anxiously explained all that had taken place. Actually, Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma had foreseen what would happen, and for that reason they had not attended the sacrifice of Daksa.

After hearing from the demigods, Lord Brahma replied, "You cannot become happy by performing a sacrifice and at the same time blaspheming a great personality. By excluding Lord Shiva from his share of the sacrificial offerings, you have all become offenders at his lotus feet. Therefore, you must go and surrender unto him by falling down at his lotus feet without any mental reservations, and in this way, he may become pleased. Lord Shiva is so powerful that he can immediately destroy all the planets, along with their presiding deities. Because he has become very aggrieved due to the loss of his wife, as well as Daksa's cruel words, it behooves you to go and beg for his forgiveness."

Thereafter, Lord Brahma, escorted the demigods and great sages to Lord Shiva's abode, which is known as Kailash Hill. While on the way, they passed over the Saugandhika forest, where Alakapuri, the abode of Kuvera, is situated. The whole area was astonishingly beautiful due to the forests filled with all varieties of fruit trees and flowers, as well as the lakes, which abounded with lotus flowers and swans. The demigods admired the bathing ghats, whose stairways were made of vaidurya stone.

At Kailash Hill there were many waterfalls whose pleasing sounds combined with the crowing of peacocks and humming of bees. The whole area was inhabited by Kinnaras and Gandharvas, along with their beautiful consorts, the Apsaras, and within the caves lived Siddhas in the company of their wives. The entire region was filled with the very best of trees, such as the mandara, parijata, tamala, tala, arjuna, mango, kadamba, campaka, ashoka, malati, mallika, madhavi and bakula, so that the scented breezes served to agitate the minds of the celestial women for sexual enjoyment.

Indeed, due to an abundance of desire trees, the abode of Lord Shiva appeared to resemble the planet of Lord Krishna in the spiritual world. Because of the many varieties of lotuses and other

fragrant flowers, the entire forest seemed to be one great garden wherein all kinds of animals roamed, including musk deer.

In Kailash there are two rivers, the Nanda and Alakananda, which are sanctified by the dust from the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda. The celestial damsels come to bathe in these rivers after having satisfied their lust by engaging in sexual activities with their husbands. After the bathing of the heavenly damsels, the water becomes yellowish due to the kunkuma from their bodies. For this reason, the elephants along with their wives come to bathe and drink, even if they are not really thirsty.

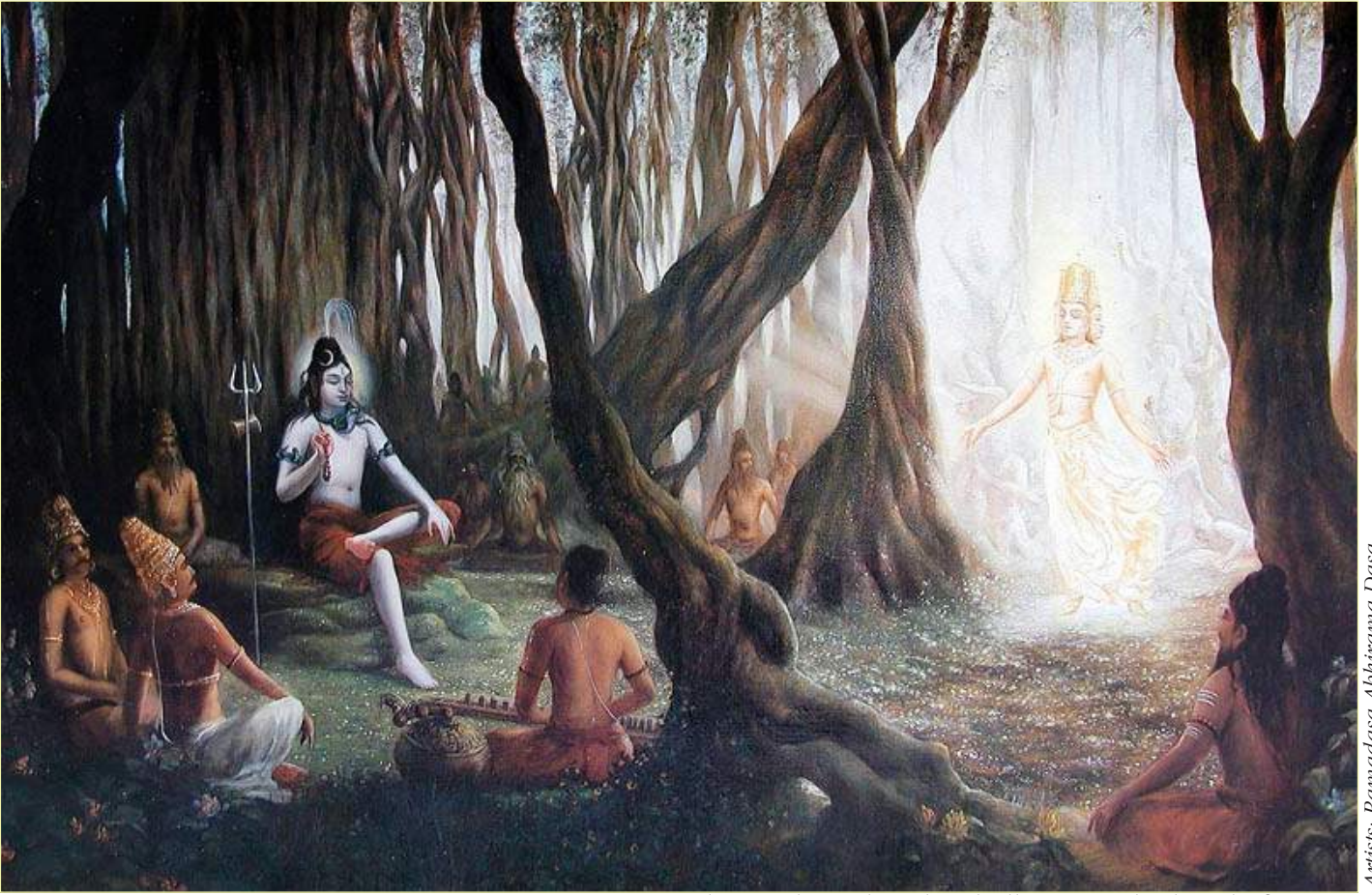
The demigods saw a small lake named Alakananda, where Sati used to bathe. Finally they came to a place where they saw a great banyan tree which was one hundred yojanas tall. The shade of this tree made the air surrounding it very cool. Similarly, as there were no bird's nests, the atmosphere was calm and quiet. The demigods saw Lord Shiva sitting underneath this tree. His expression was serene and so it seemed that he was no longer angry.

Lord Shiva was seated upon a deerskin, and was surrounded by great souls like Kuvera, Narada and the four Kumaras. Due to his body smeared with ashes, he appeared like an evening cloud, and his hair was decorated with the symbol of a crescent-moon. Because he was engaged in speaking about the Absolute Truth, the forefinger of his right hand, which held a string of *rudrākṣa* beads, was in the mode of argument. His left leg was placed upon his right thigh, and his left hand was resting upon his left thigh, a sitting posture that is called *virāsana*.

The demigods and *brāhmaṇas* offered their obeisances to Lord Shiva with folded hands. In turn, when Lord Shiva saw Lord Brahma before him, he stood up and then bowed to touch his feet, as did all the sages, headed by Narada. After being worshipped, Lord Brahma smiled to conceal his concern that Lord Shiva might still be enraged.

Lord Brahma then said, "My dear Lord Shiva, I know that you are the controller of the entire material manifestation, and thus you create, maintain and annihilate it exactly as a spider creates, maintains and winds up its web."

"My dear Lord, devotees who have fully dedicated their lives unto your lotus feet certainly see the Paramatma within everyone and thus do not discriminate between one living entity and another. They never become overwhelmed by



Artist: Ramadasa Abhirama Dasa

anger like the animals who see everything with differentiation. Those who discriminate, upon seeing the flourishing condition of others, give them distress by uttering harsh words. For this, they will be killed by providence. Therefore, there is no need for them to be killed again by an exalted personality like you. Materialists are always bewildered by maya, so a compassionate saintly person does not take their offenses seriously. Nor does he retaliate.”

“My dear Lord, you are never bewildered by the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Consequently you should be merciful toward those who are bewildered. You have a right to receive a share of the sacrificial offerings, but the foolish priests neglected you. As a result, you destroyed everything. So the sacrifice remains unfinished. Please do what is needed so that the sacrifice can be resumed and then you may take your rightful share. Let Daksa get back his life, Bhrigu his moustache, Bhaga his eyes, and Pusha his teeth. Also let the brahmanas who were injured by your soldiers become healed, by your grace.”

Lord Shiva replied, “My dear father, I do not mind the childish offenses of the less-intelligent demigods. I have punished them just to bring them to their senses. Since Daksa’s head has been

burned to ashes, he shall receive the head of a goat. Bhaga will be able to see his share of the sacrifice through the eyes of Mitra. Pusha will be able to chew only through the teeth of his disciples, or if he eats independently, he will have to be satisfied with dough made from chickpeas flour. Bhrigu will get the beard from the goat’s head that is given to Daksa. The demigods and priests who have agreed to give me my share of the sacrificial offerings will recover from all their injuries. However, those whose arms were severed will have to work with the arms of the Ashwini-kumaras, and those whose hands were cut off will have to work with the hands of Pusha.”

Everyone was satisfied with this resolution and thereafter, Bhrigu invited Lord Shiva to come to the sacrificial arena. Lord Shiva, accompanied by Lord Brahma, the demigods, and sages then went to the place where the sacrifice had been demolished. Under Lord Shiva’s direction, the head of a goat that was meant for sacrifice was placed on Daksa’s shoulders. As soon as the goat’s head was joined to his body, Daksa regained consciousness, and upon awakening from his slumber, he saw Lord Shiva standing before him.

Seeing Lord Shiva with a respectful attitude,



Artist: Dhruva Dasa

Daksa's heart, which had been polluted by envy, immediately became cleansed. Daksa wanted to offer suitable prayers to Lord Shiva, but as he sorrowfully remembered the death of his daughter, Sati, his eyes filled with tears and his voice choked up. He could not speak. Having come to his senses, Daksa pacified his mind with great endeavor.

He then prayed, "My dear Lord, I committed a great offense, but you are so kind that instead of withdrawing your mercy, you have exhibited great favor by punishing me. I did not know your glories and thus I criticized you in the assembly of demigods and sages. As a result, I was destined to plunge to hell. You have saved me from that by punishing me and thus bringing me to right consciousness."

After being pardoned by Lord Shiva, Daksa took permission from Lord Brahma and with the help of the *brāhmaṇas* resumed the sacrifice. First, the sacrificial arena was purified, followed by offering oblations into the fire called *purodāśa*. After the sanctity of the sacrificial arena had been fully restored, Daksa offered ghee into the fire as mantras from the *Yajur Veda* were being chanted. Lord Vishnu then appeared there, riding upon the shoulders of Garuda.

The Lord's great effulgence diminished the luster

of all other present. In His eight hands he held a conch shell, wheel, club, lotus flower, arrow, bow, shield and sword. Due to His various ornaments, the Lord's entire body resembled a blossoming tree beautifully decorated with various kinds of flowers. The Lord's enchanting smile captivated all those who saw Him, especially the devotees. The white camaras that appeared on both sides of His body looked like swans and the white canopy over his head appeared like the moon.

As soon as Lord Vishnu appeared, all the demigods and sages, including Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva, prostrated themselves before Him in obeisance. Although Brahma had previously referred to Lord Shiva as supreme, now both he and Lord Shiva prostrated themselves before Lord Vishnu.

The demigods and sages then stood before Lord Vishnu with folded hands and offered prayers with great awe and veneration. Everyone admitted their own faults, and glorified the Lord to the best of their ability.

Lord Shiva prayed, "My dear Lord, my mind and consciousness are always fixed upon Your lotus feet, which are worshiped by all liberated sages. Because my mind is engaged in this way, I am no longer disturbed by persons who blaspheme me, claiming that my activities are not pure."

Lord Vishnu replied by instructing Daksa about His supreme position: "O twice-born one, I am the original cause of all causes, but because I expand Myself to act through My material energy, My different representations are variously named. Thus, Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva are not different from Me, nor are any of the other living beings. Only one who is in ignorance thinks that Lord Shiva or anyone else is independent of Me. Just as no one considers the head and other bodily limbs to be separate from the whole body, those who understand the truth see everything in relation with Me."

Thereafter, Daksa worshiped Lord Vishnu by resuming his sacrificial performance. After completing the sacrifice, he very respectfully worshiped Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva separately with their respective shares of the sacrificial offerings. Finally, after satisfying all others present, Daksa took his *avabhṛtha* bath. He felt completely satisfied because he was once again situated on the correct path of religion.

The demigods then blessed Daksa so that he might always increase in piety, and thereafter, they departed for their respective abodes.



After giving up her body, Sati was born again as the daughter of Menaka and the king of the Himalayas. Later on, she once again accepted Lord Shiva as her husband, since that is their eternal relationship.

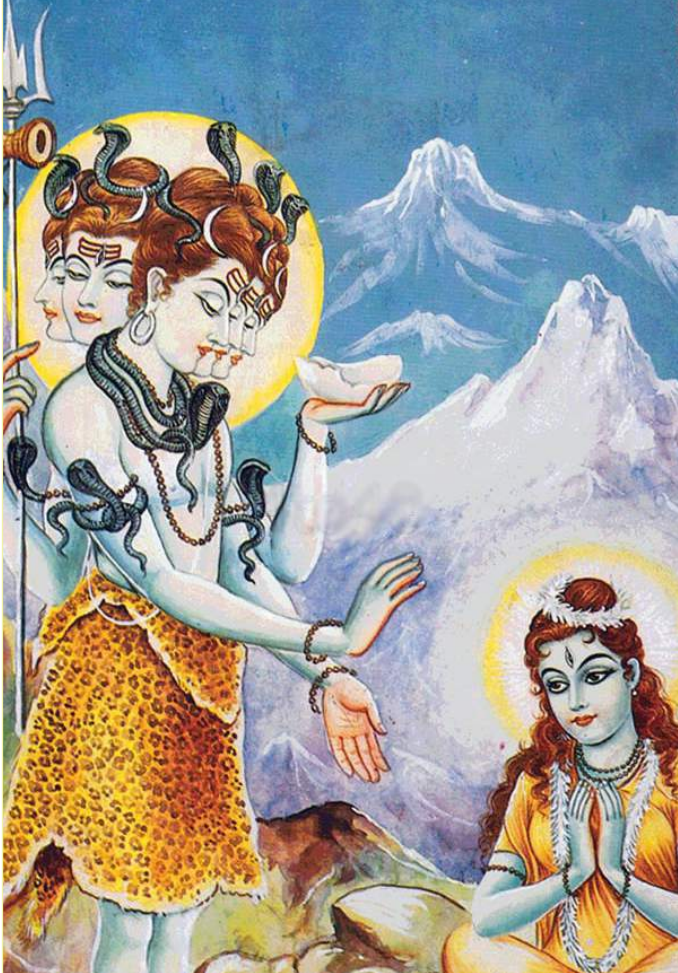
Maitreya continued, “My dear Vidura, I heard this story of the Daksa-yajna from Uddhava, the great disciple of Brihaspati. If one hears and describes this narration with faith and devotion, he will certainly become cleansed of all the contamination of material existence.”

—Adopted from the book “Srimad Bhagavatam in story form” by Purnaprajna Das. ❀

RE-BIRTH OF SATI AND DAKSA

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur

The term ‘Sati quit her body’ means that within her heart she gave up her relationship with Daksa. Since Sati is the superintendent deity of the external potency, when she quit her body she did not get a spiritual body. Rather she immediately transferred herself into the womb of Menaka, her future mother. She gave up the body she had received



Sati's rebirth as Parvati

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

from Daksa and accepted another, better body.

Daksa, who was first born during the reign of Svayambhuva Manu, offended Lord Shiva and was punished by having the head of a goat substituted for his own head. Having been insulted in this manner, he too gave up that body. In the sixth manvantara, called the Caksusa manvantara, he was born again in the womb of Marisa as Daksa.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.30.49), this fact is confirmed.

*cākṣuṣetvantareprāpte
prāk-sargekāla-vidrute
yaḥsasarjaprajāiṣṭāḥ
sadaḥsodaiva-coditāḥ*

"His previous body had been destroyed, but he, the same Daksa, inspired by the supreme will created all the desired living entities in the Caksusa manvantara." Thus Daksa regained his previous opulence and again begot thousands and millions of children to fill the three worlds.

— From *Sārāṅtha-darśinī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by Srila Vishvanātha Chakravartī Thakura. ❀



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

Dedicated to

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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(Śrīmad-bhāgavata mātmya , Chapter Three)



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Dhruva, Uttanapada and Narada



Artist: Suddha Bhakta Das

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UNUSUAL VERSES TO WASH THE SINFUL REACTIONS

Sri Maitreya Ṛṣi

*maitreya uvāca
sanakādyā naradaś ca
ṛbhur haṁso 'ruṇir yatih
naite grhān brahma-sutā
hy āvasann ūrdhva-retasaḥ*

The great sage Maitreya said: The four Kumaras – the great sages headed by Sanaka, as well as Narada, Ribhu, Hamsa, Aruni and Yati, are all sons of Brahma. None of them lived at home; they all became *ūrdhva-retā*, *naiṣṭhika-brahmacārī* (unadulterated celibates).

*mṛṣādharmaśya bhāryāsīd
dambhaṁ māyāṁ ca śatru-haṁ
asūta mīthunam tat tu
nirṛtir jagrhe 'prajāḥ*

Another son of Lord Brahma was Irreligion, whose wife was Falsity. From their union, two demons named Dambha (Bluffing) and Maya (Cheating) were born. These two demons were brought up by a demon named Nirrti, who had no children.

*tayoḥ samabhavaḥ lobho
nikṛtiś ca mahā-mate
tābhyāṁ krodhaś ca himsā ca
yad duruktiḥ svasā kalih*

O great soul, from Dambha and Maya, Lobha (Greed) and Nikṛti (Cunning) were born. From their union, children named Krodha (Anger) and Himsa (Envy) were born, and from their union Kali and his sister Durukti (Harsh Speech) were born.

*duruktau kalir ādhatta
bhayaṁ mṛtyuṁ ca sattama
tayoś ca mīthunam jajñe
yātanaṁ nirayas tathā*

O greatest of all good men, by the union of Kali and Harsh Speech, children named Mrtyu (Death) and Bhiti (Fear) were born. From the union of Mrtyu and Bhiti, children named Yatana (Excessive Pain) and Niraya (Hell) were born.

*nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā
saṅgrahaṇa mayākhyātaḥ
pratisargas tavānagha
triḥ śrutvāitat pumān puṇyam
vidhunoty ātmano malam*

My dear Vidura, I have briefly explained the causes of devastation. One who hears this description three times attains piety and it washes the sinful contamination from his soul.

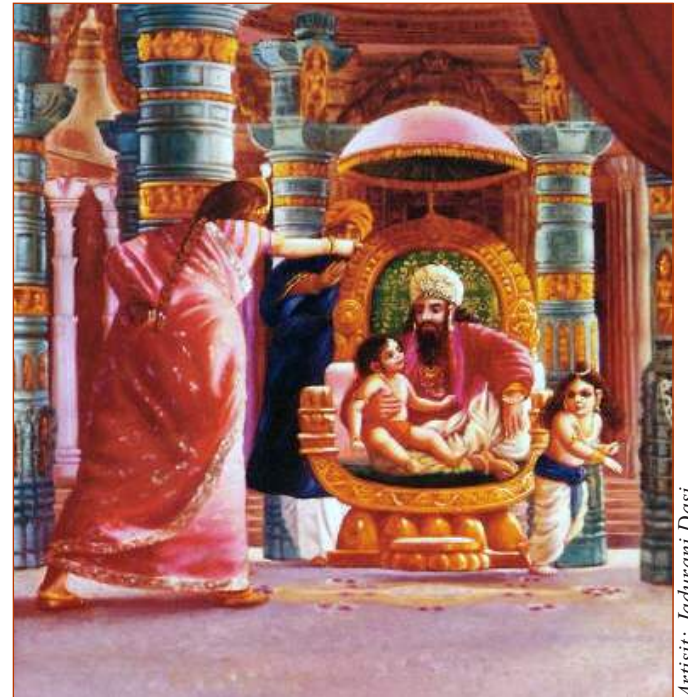
—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » SB 4.8. Dhruva Mahārāja Leaves Home for the Forest » Verses: 1-5 ❧

DHRUVA LEAVES FOR THE FOREST

Sri Maitreya Ṛṣi

Svayambhuva Manu and his wife Satarupa had two sons named Uttanapada and Priyavrata. Due to both of them being descendants of a plenary expansion of Vasudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they were very competent to rule the universe and maintain and protect the citizens. King Uttanapada had two queens, named Suniti and Suruci. Of the two wives, Suruci was the favourite. Because of this, Suniti's son Dhruva was not favoured by the King.

One day King Uttanapada was caressing Suruci's son Uttama who was on his lap. Seeing this, Dhruva also tried to sit on his lap of his father, but the King did not allow him. Seeing this, his stepmother Suruci became jealous of the child, and with great pride she began to speak in the presence of the King.



Artist: Jadurani Dasi



Queen Suruci told Dhruva: My dear child, you do not deserve to sit on the throne or on the lap of the King. It is true that you are also a son of the King. However, you did not take birth from my womb, and thus you are not qualified to sit on your father's lap. My dear child, you are unaware that you were not born from my womb but from another woman. Therefore you should know that your current attempt is doomed to fail. You are trying to fulfill an impossible desire. If you at all have any ambition to rise to the throne of the King, then you will have to undergo severe austerities. Firstly, you must satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Narayana. Then, when you are favored by Him because of such worship, you shall have to take your next birth from my womb. In this way, your desire can be fulfilled.

As a snake struck by a stick forcibly exhales air, Dhruva, having been struck by the strong words of his stepmother, began to breathe very heavily because of great anger. When he saw that his father was silent and did not respond to his stepmother's harsh words, he immediately left the palace and ran to his mother. When Dhruva reached his mother, his lips were trembling in anger, and he was crying very piteously. Queen Suniti immediately lifted her son onto her lap, while the palace residents who had heard all the harsh words of Suruci related everything in detail. Thus Suniti also became greatly aggrieved and she felt like a leaf in a forest fire. As she remembered the words of her co-wife, her bright lotus-like face became marred with tears. She also was breathing very heavily because she did not know any way to alleviate this painful situation.

Not finding any remedy to their distress, she said to her son: My dear son, do not wish anything inauspicious upon others. Anyone who inflicts pains upon others, later himself suffers from the very same pain. My dear boy, whatever has been spoken by Suruci is true; your father, the King does not consider me his wife or even his maidservant. He feels ashamed to accept me. Therefore you have taken birth from and been brought up by an unfortunate woman.

My dear boy, whatever has been spoken by your stepmother Suruci, although very harsh to hear, is completely true. If you desire at all to sit on the same throne as your stepbrother, Uttama, then give up your anger and immediately try to execute the instructions of your stepmother. Without further delay, you must engage yourself in worshiping the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is so great that simply by worshiping His lotus feet, your great-grandfather Lord Brahma acquired the necessary qualification to create this universe. Although he is unborn and is the chief of all living creatures, he is

situated in that exalted post because of the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even great yogis worship Him by controlling the mind and regulating the life air (*prāṇa*). Your grandfather Svayambhuva Manu executed great sacrifices along with the distribution of charity; then he worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead with unflinching faith and devotion. In this way, he achieved the greatest success in material happiness and afterwards he achieved liberation, which is impossible to obtain by worshiping the demigods.

My dear boy, you also should take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is very kind to all those who take shelter of Him. Persons seriously seeking liberation from the cycle of birth and death take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord in devotional service. Purify yourself by executing your occupational duties and place the Lord in your heart. Without deviating for a moment, always engage in His service. My dear Dhruva, as far as I am concerned, I do not find anyone who can mitigate your distress but the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose eyes are like lotus petals. Many demigods such as Lord Brahma seek the pleasure of the goddess of fortune, but the goddess of fortune herself, with a lotus flower in her hand, is always ready to render service to the Supreme Lord.

The instructions of Dhruva's mother, Suniti, were actually meant for fulfilling his desired objective. Therefore, after deliberate consideration and with intelligence and fixed determination, he left his father's house. The great sage Narada heard this news, and understanding all the activities of Dhruva, was struck with wonder. He approached Dhruva, and touching the boy's head with his all-virtuous hand, he thought as follows. How wonderful are the powerful *kṣatriyas*. They cannot tolerate even a slight infringement upon their prestige. Just imagine it - this boy, although a small child, could not bear the the dishonoring words from his stepmother.

The great sage Narada then told Dhruva: My dear child, you are only a little boy whose natural interests are sporting games and other frivolities. Why are you so affected by words insulting your honor? My dear Dhruva, if you feel that your sense of honor has been insulted, you still have no cause for dissatisfaction. This kind of dissatisfaction is another feature of the illusory energy of the Lord. Every living entity is controlled by his previous actions, and therefore there are different varieties of life in which one enjoys or suffers. This process ordained by the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very wonderful. One who is intelligent should accept this and be satisfied with whatever comes, favorable or unfavorable, by His supreme will. Now you have



Artist: Premavilasa Dasa

decided to undertake the mystic process of meditation under the instruction of your mother, to achieve the mercy of the Lord. In my opinion such austerities are not possible for anyone. It is very difficult to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After trying this process for many many births, remaining unattached to material contamination, fixing themselves in trance and executing different types of austerities, many mystic yogis were unable to achieve their goal of God realization.

For this reason, my dear child, you should not endeavor for this; it will not be successful. It is better that you go home. When you grow up, by the mercy of the Lord you will surely get a chance for these mystic performances. At that time you may execute this process. In the meantime, you should try to keep yourself satisfied in any condition of life - whether happy or distressful - which is offered by the Supreme will. A person who endures life in this way can very easily cross over the darkness of nescience. Every man should act like this: when he meets someone more qualified than himself, he should be very pleased; when he meets someone less qualified than himself, he should be compassionate toward him; and when he meets someone equal to himself, he should make friendship with him. In this way one will never be affected by the threefold miseries of this material world.

Dhruva Maharaja said: My dear Lord Naradaji, for a person whose heart is disturbed by the material conditions of happiness and distress, whatever you have so kindly explained for attainment of peace of mind is certainly a very good instruction. But as far as I am concerned, I am covered by ignorance, and this kind of philosophy does not touch my heart. My dear lord, I am very impudent for not accepting your instructions, but this is not my fault. It is due to my having been born in a *kṣatriya* family. My stepmother Suruci has cut my heart with her harsh words. Therefore your valuable instruction does not stay in my heart. O learned *brāhmaṇa*, I want to occupy a position more exalted than any yet achieved within the three worlds – not even by my father and grandfathers. If you will oblige, kindly advise me of an honest path to follow by which I can achieve that goal of my life. My dear lord, you are a worthy son of Lord Brahma, you travel everywhere, playing your musical instrument *vīṇā*, for the welfare of the universe. You are like the sun which orbits in the universe for the benefit of all living beings.

The great personality Narada Muni, upon hearing the words of Dhruva, became very compassionate towards him, and showing him causeless mercy, gave the following expert advice.

The great sage Narada told Dhruva Maharaja:

The instruction given by your mother Suniti to follow the path of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is very suitable for you. You should therefore completely absorb yourself in the devotional service of the Lord. Any person who desires the fruits of the four principles - religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation - should engage himself in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for worship of His lotus feet yields the fulfillment of these. My dear child, I therefore wish all good fortune for you. You should go to the bank of the Yamuna, where there is a virtuous forest named Madhuvana, where you shall become purified. Just by going there, one draws nearer to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who always resides in that place. My dear child, you should bathe three times daily in the waters of the Yamuna river, which is also known as Kalindi, because that water is very auspicious, sacred and clear. After bathing, you should perform the necessary regulative principles of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* and then sit down on your *āsana* (sitting place) in a calm and quiet place. Seated thus, practice the three kinds of breathing exercises, and in this way gradually control the life air, the mind and the senses.

Freeing yourself completely from all material contamination, with great patience meditate on the



Supreme Personality of Godhead whose form I shall now describe: The Lord's face is perpetually very beautiful and pleasing in attitude. To those devoted to Him, He never appears displeased and He is always prepared to bestow benedictions to them. His eyes, His nicely decorated eyebrows, His raised nose and His broad forehead are all very beautiful. He is more beautiful than all the demigods. The Lord's form is always youthful. Every limb and every part of His body is properly formed, free from any defect. His eyes and lips are reddish pink, like the rising sun. He is always prepared to give shelter to the surrendered soul, and anyone so fortunate as to look upon Him feels completely satisfied. The Lord is always worthy to be the master of the surrendered soul, for He is an ocean of mercy.

The Lord is further described as having the mark of *Śrīvatsa* (the abode of the goddess of fortune) and His bodily hue is a deep blue. The Lord is a person, He wears a flower garland, and He eternally manifests with four hands, which hold a conchshell, a disc, a club and a lotus flower (beginning from the lower left hand). The

entire body of that Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva, is beautifully decorated. He wears a valuable jeweled helmet, necklaces and bracelets, His neck is adorned with the Kaustubha jewel, and He is dressed in yellow silk garments. The Lord is decorated with a chain of small golden bells around His waist, and His lotus feet are similarly decorated with golden bells. All His bodily features are very attractive and pleasing to the eye. He is always peaceful, composed and calm in nature. Seeing Him is very pleasing to the eye and mind. Yogis meditate upon the transcendental form of the Lord as He stands on the whorl of the lotus of their hearts, the jewel-like nails of His lotus feet glittering. The devotee should constantly see the ever-smiling Lord in this form, as He looks very mercifully towards the surrendered souls. One who meditates in this way, concentrating his mind upon the all-auspicious form of the Lord, the bestower of all benedictions, will be quickly freed from all material contamination. And thus his meditation upon the Lord will never break.

O son of the King, I shall now give you the mantra which should be chanted with this process of meditation. One who carefully chants this mantra for seven nights can see the perfect human beings flying in the sky. '*Om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*' - this is the twelve-syllable mantra for worshipping the Lord. One should install the physical form of the Lord, and with the chanting of the mantra, offer flowers and fruits and other varieties of foodstuffs according to the rules and regulations prescribed by spiritual authorities. This should be done in consideration of place, time, and prevailing conveniences and inconveniences. One should worship the Lord by offering pure water, pure flower garlands, fruits, flowers and vegetables, which are available in the forest, or by collecting newly grown grasses, small buds of flowers or even tree bark. If possible, offer tulasi leaves, which are very dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The worshipable form of the Lord can be made of physical elements such as earth, water, pulp, wood or metal. In the forest one can make a form with no more than earth and water and worship Him according to the above principles. A devotee who has full control over his self should be very sober and peaceful and must be satisfied with eating whatever fruits and vegetables are available in the forest.

My dear Dhruva, besides worshipping the Deity and chanting the mantra three times a day, you should meditate upon the transcendental activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His different incarnations, for these are all exhibited by His supreme will and personal potencies. One should follow in the



footsteps of the previous devotees regarding worship of the Supreme Lord with the prescribed paraphernalia. Alternatively, one should offer worship within the heart by reciting the mantra to the Personality of Godhead, who is non-different from the mantra. Anyone who sincerely engages in the devotional service of the Lord with his mind, words and body, and who is fixed in the activities of the prescribed devotional methods, is blessed by the Lord according to his desire. If a devotee desires material religiosity, economic development, sense gratification or liberation from the material world, he is awarded these results. If one is very serious about liberation, he must adhere to the process of transcendental loving service twenty-four hours a day and abstain from all activities of sense gratification.

When Dhruva, the son of the King, was thus advised by the great sage Narada, he circumambulated him, as his worshipable spiritual master and offered him respectful obeisances. Then he departed for Madhuvana, a very auspicious place always imprinted with the lotus footprints of Lord Krishna. After Dhruva entered Madhuvana forest to execute devotional service, the great sage Narada decided to go to the palace of the King to see how he was faring.

—*Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » SB 4.8. Dhruva Mahārāja Leaves Home for the Forest » Verses: 1-5* ❧

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

NARADA IS LIKE THE SUPERSOUL

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

When Dhruva was telling his mother all the incidents that took place in the palace, Narada was not present. Thus the question may be raised as to how Narada understood all these. The answer is that Narada is *trikāla-jñā*; he is so powerful that he can understand the past, present and future from everyone's heart, just like the Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, after understanding the strong determination of Dhruva, Narada came to help him.

It may be explained in this way: The Supreme Personality of Godhead is present in everyone's heart, and as soon as He understands that a living entity is serious about entering devotional service, He sends His representative. In this way Narada was sent to Dhruva. This is explained in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Madhya lila 19.151 '*guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*' - by the grace of the spiritual master and Krishna, one can enter into devotional service. Because of Dhruva's strong determination, Krishna, the Supersoul, immediately sent His representative, Narada, to instruct him.

—*Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » SB 4.8. Dhruva Mahārāja Leaves Home for the Forest » Verse: 25 » Purport by His Divine Grace A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.* ❧

NARADA MEETS UTTANAPADA

EDITORIAL

Narada went to the palace of King Uttanapada and entered his courts. The King welcomed *Devāṁṣi* by offering him appropriate paraphernalia including scented water. Washing his feet, the King then invited him to sit. Narada sat down comfortably and spoke as follows: "O King, I see from your forlorn expression that something has been troubling you for some time. What is the matter? Are you experiencing any problems with the pursuance of your *dharma*, *artha*, or *kāma*? Does someone of your kith and kin suffer from any problem? Has anything dangerous or harmful happened?"

The king answered in a voice filled with sadness, "O Narada, I am worried about my son, a five-year-old boy, who is very intelligent. O, shame on me! Due to my attachment to a woman, I have been so cruel to send away this boy, having previously rejected his mother. O lord, that good-natured boy is now without shelter. Who will look after him and protect him? How much pain he



must be feeling, walking on the forest paths which are so full of thorns! Who will provide food for him in the forest? O *Devārṣi*, I cannot find peace, thinking of the sad face of my hungry child. Do tell me, is he still alive, or has he been devoured by a tiger or another ferocious animal, unable as he is to protect himself? Just see how hard-hearted I have been! This child wanted to climb on my lap, motivated by his affection, but I did not even grant him a sweet word. I behaved like the lowest of men, because of attachment to my wife! O *Devārṣi*, my heart has become very restless thinking about my innocent son Dhruva.”

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CONVERSATION BETWEEN NARADA AND UTTANAPADA

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

The King said: O *brāhmaṇa*, being merciless and controlled by my wife, I have banished my intelligent young son who is only five years old, and his mother. He must be tired and hungry. His lotus face wilted, he must be lying down in the forest. O *brāhmaṇa*, have the wolves eaten the unprotected boy? I am controlled by a woman. See my cruelty! Most vile, I did not welcome my son with love when he tried to climb on my lap.

Narada said: O King, your son is protected by the Lord and thus he is safe. Though his greatness is yet unknown, His fame will soon spread throughout the universe. Therefore do not lament. O King, after performing tasks difficult even for the *devatās*, Dhruva

will soon return, spreading your fame everywhere.

After hearing what Narada had said, the King gave up interest in his wealthy kingdom and thought only of his son. After taking bath in the Yamuna at Madhuvana and fasting that night, the purified Dhruva, then worshipped the Lord with full attention as instructed by Narada. For one month, Dhruva worshipped the Lord, eating only kapittha and badara berries every third night just to maintain his body. In the second month he ate only dry grass and leaves every six days, while worshipping the Lord. In the third month he drank only water every nine days, worshipping the Lord in *samādhi*. In the fourth month, having controlling his breathing, he took only air as food every twelve days, and worshipped by meditating on the Lord. In the fifth month, controlling his breath, the prince, meditating on the Lord, stood on one foot motionless like a pillar.

Controlling the mind completely, meditating on the form of the Lord which is not perceivable by material senses, Dhruva did not see anything else. When he meditated on the Lord, the shelter of all the elements, the Lord of matter and the jivas, the three worlds began to tremble. When the prince stood on one leg, the earth, pressed by his big toe, sank lower by a half *pradeśa*, just as a boat with an elephant rocks from side to side with each of its steps. When Dhruva, blocking all the doors of his body and stopping his life airs, meditated on the Lord with his intelligence merged in the total intelligence, the people of the universe along with the *devatās*, became completely breathless and sought shelter of the Supreme Lord.

The *devatās* said: O Lord, we have never witnessed anyone block the breathing of all moving and non-moving beings. Thus we have approached You who





Artist: Puskar Dasa

are capable of giving shelter. Please save us from this danger.

The Lord said: Do not fear. Return peacefully to your respective abodes. I will stop the boy from doing such unbearable austerities because he has concentrated his mind fully on me. It is only due to his severe *tapasya* that your breathing has been impeded.

— From *Sārārtha-darśinī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by Śrīla Viṣṇuānātha Cakravartī Thākura. ॐ

DEMIGODS TEST DHRUVA

Śrīla Lochan Das Thākura

The demigods, astonished to see the severity of Dhruva's austerities, were afraid of losing their posts. Brahma, Indra, Kuvera and Varuna spoke worriedly that the Lord might help Dhruva to take away their power. They planned to divert Dhruva from his rigorous penances.

Brahma, Shiva and others went to test Dhruva. One demigod shouted in his ear, 'Dhruva, have you come here to die?' Another told him, 'Dhruva, your father died'. One demigod said, 'Dhruva, look, a poisonous snake is coming to bite and kill you.' Another said, 'Dhruva, your mother died.' One said, 'Dhruva, quickly run away from here. A raging forest fire is rapidly approaching, and soon you'll burn to death.'

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

Seeing the staunch Dhruva resolute and unaffected, Indra mounted his elephant carrier Airavata and attacked him. Failing to pierce the boy with his tusks, Airavata terrorized Dhruva by coiling him in his trunk. Dhruva stood undaunted. The demigod Vayu tried to swallow Dhruva by taking the form of a python. Surya, the sun-god, became a tiger to drink Dhruva's blood. Binding him with snakes, Agnideva tried to throw Dhruva in a fire. Chandra, the moon-god attempted to drown Dhruva in the Yamuna.

For one who has chanted the names of Krishna, what harm can millions of snake bites do? Failing to break Dhruva's determined meditation, Brahma, Surya, Indra and the other demigods ran away in disgust. Completely undisturbed, Dhruva continued his meditation, fixing his mind on the lotus feet of Lord Vasudeva. While Dhruva maintained his meditation, Narada Muni paid a visit to Vaikuntha.

— From *Sri Chaitanya Mangala* of Śrī Lochan Das Thākura, Translated by Śrīla Mahamidhi Swami ॐ



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(Śrīmad-bhāgavata mātmya , Chapter Three)



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NARADA VISITS VAIKUNTHA

Srila Lochan Das Thakur

When Dhruva was maintaining his meditation, Narada Muni went to Vaikuntha. With sweet music from his *vinā*, Narada Muni began to entertain Lord Vishnu, who was sitting on His throne with Lakshmi devi. Smiling gently, the Lord leaned over and said, "Narada, why am I not enjoying your *vinā* today?"

Narada replied, "Listen, my dear lotus-eyed Lord. Today your mind finds no pleasure in my music, because You, who are the Protector of the distressed, are thinking of one of Your devotees."

Lord Vishnu said, "Who is that devotee who is remembering Me?"

Narada Muni replied, "Dhruva, the son of King Uttanapada. He is a saintly boy, but he suffers misfortune since his mother, Suniti, is not loved by her husband, the King. Recently, Dhruva's step-mother, Suruci, was sitting on the throne with King Uttanapada playing with their seven year old son. Seeing the fun, Dhruva tried to climb up the King's throne, but Suruci pushed him down. Poor Dhruva fell to the floor, crying. Being controlled by his wife, the King remained silent. Suruci's actions and words strongly affected Dhruva and his heart burned. Although a tender-aged boy, he left home and went to the forest of Madhuvana to perform intense *tapasya* [penance]."

The lotus-eyed Lord Vishnu, smiling slightly, spoke sweetly. "Narada, I don't show My mercy to one who is not connected to Me by initiation. I also don't take offense from one who is not initiated."

Narada said, "My Lord, Dhruva is initiated by me. So please show him Your mercy. Go to see him and

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

relieve him from the fire of material existence."

The Lord replied, "I will surely give My mercy to anyone who gives up his parents, goes to Madhuvana, and meditates upon Me while performing severe austerities!"

O Narada, a non-devotee can't take birth in the womb of a devotee. On My behalf, a Vaisnava can tolerate any difficulty. I will always give My mercy to a devotee. I am bound by the ropes of the *prema-bhakti* of My devotees. I can never neglect any devotee who thinks of Me. Therefore, I will give Dhruva whatever he wants."

— From *Sri Chaitanya Mangala* of Sri Lochan Das Thakur, Translated by Srila Mahamidhi Swami

DHRUVA GLORIFIES THE SUPREME LORD

Sri Maitreya Rsi

The Lord, who is nondifferent from the Sahasrasirsa incarnation, got on the back of Garuda, and together they went to the Madhuvana Forest to see His servant Dhruva. Dhruva, in his mature yogic process, was fully absorbed in meditation, on the form of the Lord, which was brilliant like lightning. All of a sudden that wonderful form disappeared. Thus Dhruva was perturbed, and his meditation broke. But as soon as he opened his eyes he saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead personally present, just as he had been seeing the Lord in his heart.

When Dhruva saw his Lord in front of his very eyes, he was greatly agitated and offered Him obeisances and respect. He fell flat before Him like a rod and became absorbed in love of Godhead. Dhruva, in ecstasy, looked upon the Lord as if he were drinking the Lord with his eyes, kissing the lotus feet of the Lord with his mouth, and embracing the Lord with his arms.

Dhruva was a small boy, yet he wanted to offer prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead in suitable language. But because he was inexperienced, he could not do so. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, being situated in everyone's heart, could understand Dhruva's awkward position.

Out of His causeless mercy He touched His conch shell to the forehead of Dhruva, who stood before Him with folded hands. At that time Dhruva became perfectly aware of all the Vedic conclusions. He understood the Absolute Truth complete with His relationship with all living entities. In accordance with the line of devotional service to the Supreme Lord whose fame is widespread, Dhruva, who in the future would receive a planet which would never be



Artist: Prasanta Dasa

annihilated, even during the time of dissolution, offered his deliberate and conclusive prayers.

dhruva uvāca

*yo 'ntaḥ praviśya mama vācam imāṁ prasuptāṁ
sañjīva yaty akhila-śakti-dharaḥ sva-dhāmnā
anyāṁś ca hasta-caraṇa-śravaṇa-tva-gādīn
prāṇān namo bhagavate puruṣāya tubhyam*

Dhruva Maharaja said: My dear Lord, You are all-powerful. After entering within me, You have enlivened all my sleeping senses—my hands, legs, ears, touch sensation, life force and especially my power of speech. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

*ekas tvam eva bhagavān idam ātma-śaktiā
māyākhyayoru-guṇayā mahad-ādy-aśeṣam
sṛṣṭvānuviśya puruṣas tad-asad-guṇeṣu
nāneva dāruṣu vibhāvasu vad vibhāsi*

My Lord, You are the supreme one, but by Your different energies You appear differently in the spiritual and material worlds. You create the total energy of the material world by Your external potency, and after creation You enter within the material world as the Supersoul. You are the Supreme Person, and through the temporary modes of material nature You create

varieties of manifestation, just as fire, entering into wood of different shapes, burns brilliantly in different varieties.

*tvad-dattayā vayunayedam acaṣṭa viśvaṁ
supta-prabuddha iva nātha bhavat-prapannaḥ
tasyāpavargya-śaraṇaṁ tava pāda-mūlān
vismaryate kṛta-vidā katham āṛta-bandho*

O my master, Lord Brahma is fully surrendered unto You. In the beginning You gave him knowledge, and thus he could see and understand the entire universe, just as a person awakens from sleep and visualizes his immediate duties. You are the only shelter of all persons who desire liberation, and You are the friend of all who are distressed. How, therefore, can a learned person who has perfect knowledge ever forget You?

*nūnaṁ vimuṣṭa-matayas tava māyayā te
ye tvāṁ bhavāpyaya-vimokṣaṇam anya-hetoḥ
arcanti kalpaka-taruṁ kuṇapopabhogyam
icchanti yat sparsajāṁ niraye 'pi nṛṇāṁ*

Persons who worship You simply for the sense gratification of this bag of skin are certainly influenced by Your illusory energy. In spite of having You, who are like a desire tree and are the cause of liberation from birth and death, foolish persons, such as me, desire benedictions from You for sense gratification, which is available even for those who live in hellish conditions.

*yā nirvṛtis tanu-bhṛtāṁ tava pāda-padma-
dhyānād bhavaj-jana-kathā-śravaṇena vā syāt
sā brahmaṇi sva-mahimany api nātha mā bhūt
kiṁ tv antakāsi-lulitāt patatāṁ vimānāt*

My Lord, the transcendental bliss derived from meditating upon Your lotus feet or hearing about Your glories from pure devotees is so unlimited that it is far beyond the stage of *brahmānanda*, wherein one thinks himself merged in the impersonal Brahman as one with the Supreme. Since *brahmānanda* is also defeated by the transcendental bliss derived from devotional service, then what to speak of the temporary blissfulness of elevating oneself to the heavenly planets, which is ended by the separating sword of time? Although one may be elevated to the heavenly planets, he falls down in due course of time.



*bhaktiṁ muhuḥ pravahatām tvayi me prasaṅgo
bhūyād ananta mahatām amalāśayānām
yenāñjasolbaṇam uru-vyasanāṁ bhavābdhiṁ
neṣye bhavad-guṇa-kathāmrta-pāna-mattaḥ*

O unlimited Lord, kindly bless me so that I may associate with great devotees who engage in Your transcendental loving service constantly, as the waves of a river constantly flow. Such transcendental devotees are completely situated in an uncontaminated state of life. By the process of devotional service I shall surely be able to cross the nescient ocean of material existence, which is filled with the waves of blazing, fire like dangers. It will be very easy for me, for I am becoming mad to hear about Your transcendental qualities and pastimes, which are eternally existent.

*te na smaranty atitarāṁ priyam īśa martyaṁ
ye cānv adah suta-suhṛd-grha-vitta-dārāḥ
ye tv abja-nābha bhavadya-padāravinda-
saugandhya-lubdha-hṛdayeṣu kṛta-prasaṅgāḥ*

O Lord who has a lotus navel, if a person happens to associate with a devotee whose heart always hankers after Your lotus feet, seeking always their fragrance, he is never attached to the material body or, in a bodily relationship, to offspring, friends, home, wealth and wife, which are very, very dear to materialistic persons. Indeed, he does not care for them.

*tīryaṁ-naga-dviḥja-sarīṣpa-deva-daiitya-
martyādibhiḥ paricitāṁ sad-asad-viśeṣam
rūpaṁ sthaviṣṭham aja te mahad-ādy-anekaṁ
nātaḥ paraṁ parama vedmi na yatra vādaḥ*

My dear Lord, O Supreme Unborn, I know that the different varieties of living entities, such as animals, trees, birds, reptiles, demigods and human beings, are spread throughout the universe, which is caused by the total material energy, and I know that they are sometimes manifest and sometimes unmanifest; but I have never experienced the supreme form I behold as I see You now. Now all kinds of methods of theorizing have come to an end.

*kalpānta etad akhilaṁ jāthareṇa grhṇan
śete pumān sva-dṛg ananta-sakhas tad-anke
yan-nābhi-sindhu-ruha-kāñcana-loka-padma-
garbhe dyumān bhagavate praṇato 'smi tasmai*

My dear Lord, at the end of each millennium the Supreme Personality of Godhead Garbhodakashayi Vishnu dissolves everything manifested within the universe into His belly. He lies down on the lap of Sesha Naga, from His navel sprouts a golden lotus flower on a stem, and on that lotus Lord Brahma is created. I can understand that You are the same Supreme Godhead. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

*tvam nitya-mukta-parīśuddha-vibuddha ātmā
kūṭa-stha ādi-puruṣo bhagavānś try-adhiśaḥ
yad-buddhy-avasthitim akhaṇḍitayā sva-dṛṣṭyā
draṣṭā sthitāv adhimakho vyatirikta āsse*

My Lord, by Your unbroken transcendental glance You are the supreme witness of all stages of intellectual activities. You are eternally liberated, Your existence is situated in pure goodness, and You are existent in the Supersoul without change. You are the original Personality of Godhead, full with six opulences, and You are eternally the master of the three modes of material nature. Thus, You are always different from the ordinary living entities. As Lord Vishnu, You maintain all the affairs of the entire universe, and yet You stand aloof and are the enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices.

*yasmin viruddha-gatayo hy anīśaṁ patanti
vidyādayo vividha-śaktaya āmupūrvyāt
tad brahma viśva-bhavam ekam anantam ādyaṁ
ānanda-mātram avikāram ahaṁ prapadye*

My dear Lord, in Your impersonal manifestation of Brahman there are always two opposing elements—knowledge and ignorance. Your multienergies are continually manifest, but the impersonal Brahman, which is undivided, original, changeless, unlimited and blissful, is the cause of the material manifestation. Because You are the same impersonal Brahman, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

*satyāśiṣo hi bhagavānś tava pāda-padman
āśiṣ tathāmubhajataḥ puruṣārtha-mūrteḥ
apy evam aṛya bhagavān paripāti dīnān
vāśreva vatsakam anugraha-kātarō 'smān*

My Lord, O Supreme Lord, You are the supreme personified form of all benediction. Therefore, for one who abides in Your devotional service with no other desire, worshipping Your lotus feet is better than becoming king and lording it over a kingdom. That



is the benediction of worshipping Your lotus feet. To ignorant devotees like me, You are the causelessly merciful maintainer, just like a cow, who takes care of the newly born calf by supplying milk and giving it protection from attack.

When Dhruva Maharaja, who had good intentions in his heart, finished his prayer, the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, who is very kind to His devotees and servants, congratulated him, speaking as follows.

The Personality of Godhead said: My dear Dhruva, son of the King, you have executed pious vows, and I also know the desire within your heart. Although your desire is very ambitious and very difficult to fulfill, I shall favor you with its fulfillment. All good fortune unto you. I shall award you the glowing planet known as the polestar, which will continue to exist even after the dissolution at the end of the millennium. No one has ever ruled this planet, which is surrounded by all the solar systems, planets and stars. All the luminaries in the sky circumambulate this planet, just as bulls tread around a central pole for the purpose of crushing grains. Keeping the polestar to their right, all the stars inhabited by the great sages like Dharma, Agni, Kashyapa and Shukra circumambulate this planet, which continues to exist even after the dissolution of all others. After your father goes to the forest and awards you the rule of his kingdom, you will rule continuously the entire world for thirty-six thousand years, and all your senses will continue to be as strong as they are now. You will never become old. Sometime in the future your brother, Uttama, will go hunting in the forest, and while absorbed in hunting, he will be killed. Your stepmother, Suruci, being maddened upon the death of her son, will go to search him out in the forest, but she will be devoured by a forest fire. I am the heart of all sacrifices. You will be able to perform many great sacrifices and also give great charities. In this way you will be able to enjoy the blessings of material happiness in this life, and at the time of your death you will be able to remember Me. My dear Dhruva, after your material life in this body, you will go to My planet, which is always offered obeisances by the residents of all other planetary systems. It is situated above the planets of the seven *ṛśis*, and having gone there you will never have to come back again to this material world.

After being worshiped and honored by the boy, Dhruva Maharaja, and after offering him His abode, Lord Vishnu, on the back of Garuda, returned to His abode, as Dhruva Maharaja looked on. Despite having achieved the desired result of his determination by worshipping the lotus feet of the Lord, Dhruva Maharaja

was not very pleased. Thus he returned to his home.

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter: 9. Dhruva Maharaja Returns Home » Verses: 1-27 ❀

WHY WAS DHRUVA DISPLEASED?

His Divine Grace

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

A pure devotee is always free from any kind of material desires. In the material world, one's material desires are all most demonic; one thinks of others as one's enemies, one thinks of revenge against one's enemies, one aspires to become the topmost leader or topmost person in this material world, and thus one competes with all others. This has been described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Sixteenth Chapter, as asuric. A pure devotee has no demand from the Lord. His only concern is to serve the Lord sincerely and seriously, and he is not at all concerned about what will happen in the future.

In the *Mukunda-mālā-stotra*, King Kulashekharā, author of the book, states in his prayer: "My dear Lord, I don't want any position of sense gratification within this material world. I simply want to engage in Your service perpetually." Similarly, Lord Chaitanya, in His *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, also prayed, "My Lord, I do not want any amount of material wealth, I do not want any number of materialistic followers, nor do I want any attractive wife to enjoy. The only thing I want is that I may engage life after life in Your service." Lord Chaitanya did not pray even for *mukti*, or liberation.

Dhruva Maharaja was influenced by a revengeful attitude towards his insulting stepmother, did not think of *mukti*, nor did he know what *mukti* was. Therefore he failed to aim for *mukti* as his goal in life. But a pure devotee also does not want liberation. He is a soul completely surrendered to the Supreme Lord, and he does not demand anything from the Lord. This position was realized by Dhruva Maharaja when he saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead present personally before him because he was elevated to the *vasudeva* platform. The *vasudeva* platform refers to the stage at which material contamination is conspicuous by absence only, or in other words where there is no question of the material modes of nature—goodness, passion and ignorance—and one can therefore see the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because on the *vasudeva* platform one can see God face to face, the Lord is also called *Vāsudeva*.



Artist: Baradwaja Dasa, Muralidhara Dasa, Jadurani Dasi

Dhruva Maharaja's demand was for a position so exalted that it was never enjoyed even by Lord Brahma, his great-grandfather. Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is so affectionate and kind towards His devotee, especially to a devotee like Dhruva Maharaja, who went to render devotional service in the forest alone at the age of only five years, that although the motive might be impure, the Lord does not consider the motive; He is concerned with the service. But if a devotee has a particular motive, the Lord directly or indirectly knows it, and therefore He does not leave the devotee's material desires unfulfilled. These are some of the special favors by the Lord to a devotee.

Dhruva Maharaja was offered Dhruvaloka, a planet that was never resided upon by any conditioned soul. Even Brahma, although the topmost living creature within this universe, was not allowed to enter Dhruvaloka. Whenever there is a crisis within this universe, the demigods go to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṣīrodakashayi Viṣṇu, and they stand on the beach of the Milk Ocean. So the fulfillment of Dhruva Maharaja's demand—a position more exalted than that of even his great-grandfather, Brahma—was offered to him.

The Lord is known as *mukti-pati*, which means "one under whose lotus feet there are all kinds of *mukti*."

There are five kinds of *mukti*—*sāyujya*, *sārūpya*, *sālokya*, *sāmīpya* and *sārṣṭi*. Out of these five *muktis*, which can be achieved by any person engaged in devotional service to the Lord, the one which is known as *sāyujya* is generally demanded by Mayavadi philosophers; they demand to become one with the impersonal Brahman effulgence of the Lord. In the opinion of many scholars, this *sāyujya-mukṭi*, although counted among the five kinds of *mukti*, is not actually *mukti* because from *sāyujya-mukti* one may again fall down to this material world. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.32), it is said, *patanty adhaḥ*, which means "they again fall down." The monist philosopher, after executing severe austerity, merges into the impersonal effulgence of the Lord, but the living entity always wants reciprocation in loving affairs. Therefore, although the monist philosopher is elevated to the status of being one with the effulgence of the Lord, because there is no facility for associating with the Lord and rendering service unto Him, he again falls into this material world, and his service propensity is satisfied by materialistic welfare activities like humanitarianism, altruism and philanthropy. There are many instances of such falldowns, even for great *saṁnyāsīs* in the Mayavada school. Therefore Vaiṣṇava philosophers do not accept *sāyujya-mukti* to be within the category of *mukti*. According to them, *mukti* means transferal to the loving service of the Lord from one's position of serving *māyā*.

Lord Chaitanya also says in this connection that the constitutional position of a living entity is to render service to the Lord. That is real *mukti*. When one is situated in his original position, giving up artificial positions, he is called *mukta*, or liberated. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* this is confirmed: anyone who engages in rendering transcendental loving service to the Lord is considered to be *mukta*, or *brahma-bhūta* [SB 4.30.20]. It is said in *Bhagavad-gītā* that a devotee is considered to be on the *brahma-bhūta* platform when he has no material contamination. In the *Padma Purāṇa* this is also confirmed: *mukti* means engagement in the service of the Lord.

The great sage Maitreya explained that Dhruva Maharaja did not desire in the beginning to engage in the service of the Lord, but he wanted an exalted position better than his great-grandfather's. This is more or less not service to the Lord but service to the senses. Even if one gets the position of Brahma, the most exalted position in this material world, he is a conditioned soul. Śrīla Prabhodhananda Sarasvatī says that if one is elevated to real, pure devotional service, he considers even great demigods like Brahma and Indra to be on an equal level with an insignificant insect.

The reason is that an insignificant insect has a desire for sense gratification and even a great personality like Lord Brahma also wants to dominate this material nature.

Dhruva Maharaja's propensity in the beginning was like that. He wanted to dominate this material world in a greater position than Lord Brahma. Therefore elsewhere it is described that after the appearance of the Lord, when Dhruva Maharaja thought and compared his determination to his final reward, he realized that he had wanted a few particles of broken glass but instead had received many diamonds. As soon as he saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face, he immediately became conscious of the unimportance of his demand from the Lord to have an exalted position better than Lord Brahma's.

When Dhruva Maharaja became situated on the *vasudeva* platform due to seeing the Lord face to face, all his material contamination was cleared. Thus he became ashamed of what his demands were and what he had achieved. He was very much ashamed to think that although he had gone to Madhuvana, giving up the kingdom of his father, and he had gotten a spiritual master like Narada Muni, he was still thinking of revenge against his stepmother and wanted to occupy an exalted post within this material world. These were the causes for his moroseness even after he received all the desired benedictions from the Lord.

When Dhruva Maharaja factually saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there was no question of a revengeful attitude towards his stepmother nor any aspiration to lord it over the material world, but the Supreme Personality is so kind that He knew that Dhruva Maharaja wanted these. When Dhruva Maharaja demanded material benefits, the Lord was present within his heart and so knew everything. The Lord always knows everything a man is thinking. This is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* also: *vedāhaṁ samatītāni* [Bg. 7.26]. The Lord fulfilled all Dhruva Maharaja's desires. His revengeful attitude towards his stepmother and stepbrother was satisfied, his desire for a more exalted position than that of his great-grandfather was also fulfilled, and at the same time, his eternal position in Dhruvaloka was fixed. Although Dhruva Maharaja's achievement of an eternal planet was not conceived of by him, Krishna thought, "What will Dhruva do with an exalted position within this material world?" Therefore He gave Dhruva the opportunity to rule this material world for thirty-six thousand years with unchangeable senses and the chance to perform many great sacrifices and thus become the most reputed king within this material world. And, after finishing with all this material enjoyment, Dhruva would be promoted to the spiritual



world, which includes the Dhruvaloka.

—*Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter: 9. Dhruva Maharaja Returns Home » Verse: 29 » Purport by His Divine Grace A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.* ❀

DHRUVA RETURNS HOME

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur

When the King heard that his son was coming back, as if returning from death, he could not believe it. How can a rascal like me have such good fortune? But by dint of his having faith in the words of Narada, he believed it. Overwhelmed with an outburst of joy, and feeling greatly pleased, he gave a valuable necklace to the bearer of the news. Eager to see his son, he hastily came out of the city, riding his gold ornamented chariot which was drawn by fine horses. The King was surrounded by elders of the family, ministers and friends, and he went accompanied by the sounds of conches, drums, and flutes, and the chanting of the Vedas. His two queens Suniti and Suruci, ornamented with gold, mounted a palanquin along with Uttama, the King's other son, and also went out. Seeing his son Dhruva approaching near a grove, the King who had been longing for him for a long time, breathing heavily, immediately dismounted from his chariot and approached the boy. Overwhelmed with affection, he embraced his dear son who had destroyed unlimited sins by receiving the touch of the Lord Vishnu's feet. His greatest desire fulfilled, the King smelled his son's



head again and again, and bathed him with cold tears. Bowing to his father's feet, and receiving blessings of *mantras*, Dhruva, the foremost among good men, was welcomed. He then bowed to his two mothers with his head. Suruci raised the boy up when he fell at her feet. Embracing him, she said with a choked voice and tears, "May you live long!"

Just as water flows naturally to a lower level, all living beings naturally offer respect to that person with whom the Lord is pleased, because of his qualities and universal friendliness. Overwhelmed with affection, Uttama and Dhruva embraced each other. Their hairs stood on end and torrents of tears appeared. Embracing her son, dearer to her than her life airs, Suniti, his mother, gave up her grief and was satisfied by touching his body. Milk constantly flowed from her breasts, which were sprinkled with her tears. She was the mother of a hero. The public praised the queen saying, "By good fortune, your son, the destroyer of suffering, has returned after being lost a long time. He will protect the whole earth. You must have worshiped the Supreme Lord, destroyer of his devotees' suffering, meditating on whom the wise have conquered all powerful death."

Whilst being praised, the joyful King placed Dhruva, adored by the people, along with his brother, on an elephant and returned to his city. Every door was decorated with arches, erected overhead which had shining *makaras* engraved on them. The doorways were also decorated with banana trunks with buds and flowers and young betel trees. Over the doors were hung mango leaves, cloth and strings of pearls and the entrances were decorated with water pots and lamps. Everywhere the city was ornamented by having walls, gates and houses covered in gold, and it shone with beautiful domes and spires. The yards, highways, watchtowers and roads were washed and smeared with sandalwood and covered with offerings of raw rice, fruits, flowers, barley grains and fused rice. As they saw Dhruva approach on the road, the chaste women of the city scattered white mustard seeds, barley, yogurt, water, *dūva* grass, flowers and fruits, while uttering blessings out of affection. While hearing beautiful songs Dhruva entered the house of his father.

From then on Dhruva lived like a *devatā* in the heavens. He was hrupampered constantly by his father who situated him in the best of houses, covered with valuable jewels. In that house there were valuable chairs, golden furniture and ivory beds which were white like the foam of milk and covered with gold.

There were jewel lamps embellished with bejeweled figures of women, shining on crystal and emerald walls. There were pleasant gardens with colorful,

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

heavenly trees, filled with singing couples of birds and buzzing, intoxicated bees. There were lakes with cat's eye staircases, filled with lotuses, blue lotuses and white lotuses, inhabited by swans, ducks, cakravakas and cranes.

Uttanapada, sage among kings, seeing and hearing the great influence of his son, felt great wonder. Seeing that Dhruva was mature, approved by the ministers, and beloved of the citizens, the King made him king of the earth. Considering his advanced age, the King, reflecting on his goal in life, became detached and entered the forest.

— From *Sārāṅtha-darśinī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter: 9. Dhruva Maharaja Returns Home » Verses: 37-67 by Srila Vishvanātha Cakravartī Thakura. ❧



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

Dedicated to

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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(Śrīmad-bhāgavata mātmya , Chapter Three)



Śrī Pāṇḍava-nirjalā Ekādaśī

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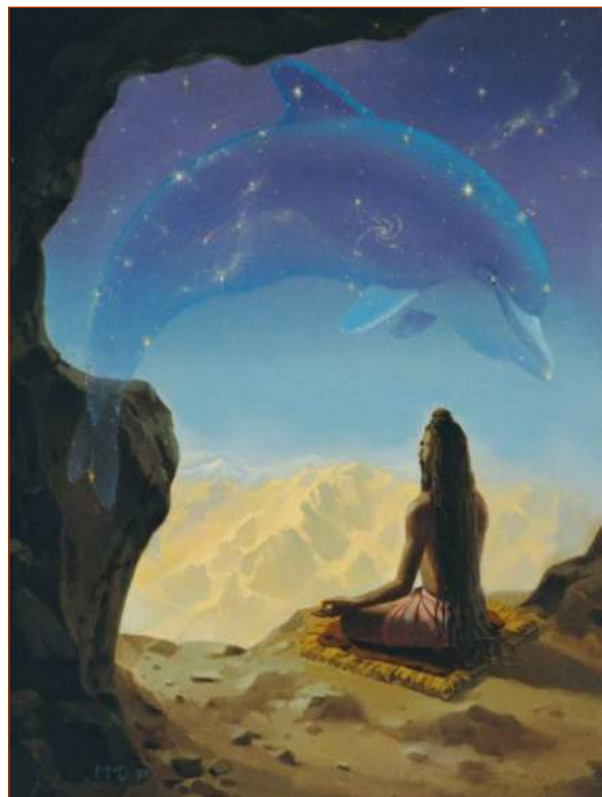
UNDERSTANDING DHRUVALOKA

His Divine Grace

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DHRUVA'S FIGHT WITH THE YAKSAS

Sri Maitreya R̥ṣi

Dhruva Maharaja married the daughter of Prajapati Shishumara, whose name was Bhrami. Two sons named Kalpa and Vatsara were born of her. The greatly powerful Dhruva Maharaja had another wife, named Ila, who was the daughter of the demigod Vayu. By her he begot a son named Utkala and a very beautiful daughter. Dhruva Maharaja's younger brother Uttama, who was still unmarried, once went on a hunting excursion in the Himalaya Mountains and was killed by a powerful Yaksha. His mother, Suruci, also followed the path of her son [she died].

When Dhruva Maharaja heard of the killing of his brother Uttama by the Yaksas, he became overwhelmed with lamentation and anger. He mounted on his chariot and went out to defeat the city of the Yaksas, Alakapuri. Dhruva Maharaja went to the north, in the direction of the Himalayan mountains. In a valley he saw a city full of ghostly persons who were followers of Lord Shiva. As soon as Dhruva Maharaja reached Alakapuri, he immediately blew his conchshell forcefully and the sound reverberated throughout the entire sky and in every direction. The wives of the Yaksas became very much frightened. From their eyes it was apparent that they were full of anxiety.

The greatly powerful heroes of the Yaksas, unable to tolerate the resounding vibration of the conchshell of Dhruva Maharaja, came forth from their city with weapons and attacked Dhruva Maharaja, who was a great charioteer and certainly a great bowman also. In response Dhruva immediately began to kill them by simultaneously discharging arrows three at a time. When the heroes of the Yaksas saw that all their lives were being thus threatened by Dhruva Maharaja, they could very easily understand their awkward position, and they concluded that they would certainly be defeated. However as heroes, they lauded the action of Dhruva. Just like serpents, who cannot tolerate being trampled upon by one's feet, the Yaksas, being intolerant of the wonderful prowess of Dhruva Maharaja, shot twice as many arrows as before each soldier fired six arrows at once and thus they very valiantly exhibited their prowess.

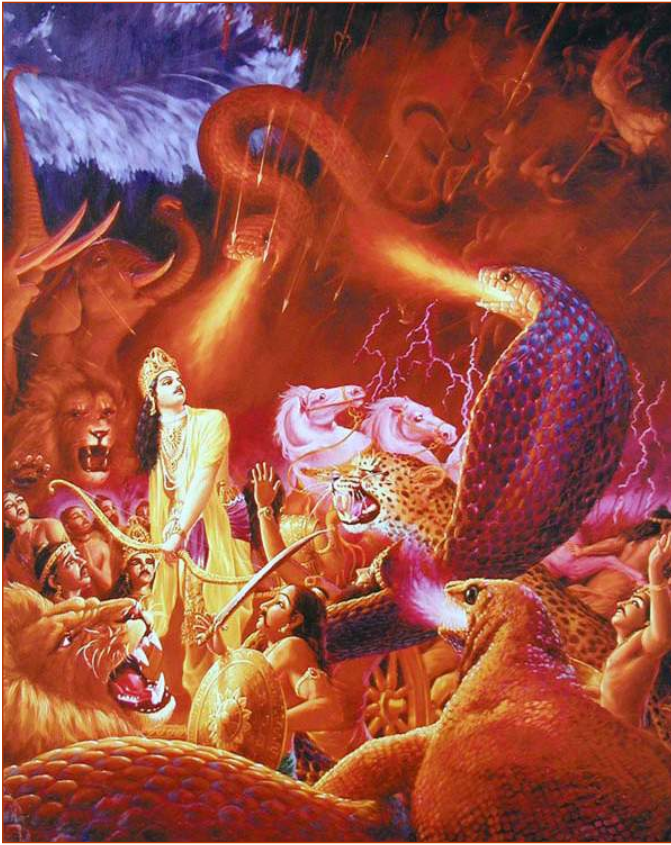
The Yaksha soldiers were 130,000 in number. They were all strong, greatly angry and all desiring to defeat the wonderful activities of Dhruva Maharaja. With full strength they showered upon Maharaja Dhruva, along with his chariot and charioteer, various types of feathered arrows, *parighas* [iron bludgeons],

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nistrimśas [swords], *prāsaśūlas* [tridents], *paraśvadhās* [lances], *śaktis* [pikes], *ṛṣṭis* [spears] and *bhuṣuṇḍī* weapons. Dhruva Maharaja was completely covered by an incessant shower of weapons, just as a mountain is covered by incessant rainfall. When all the Siddhas from the higher planetary systems who were observing the fight from the sky, saw that Dhruva Maharaja had been covered by the incessant arrows of the enemy, they roared tumultuously, "The grandson of Manu, Dhruva, is now lost!" They cried that Dhruva Maharaja was just like the sun and that now he had set within the ocean of the Yaksas. The Yaksas, being temporarily victorious, exclaimed that they had conquered Dhruva Maharaja. Nevertheless Dhruva's chariot suddenly appeared, just as the sun suddenly appears from within foggy mist.

Dhruva Maharaja's bow and arrows twanged and hissed, causing lamentation in the hearts of his enemies. He began to shoot incessant arrows, shattering all their different weapons, just as the blasting wind scatters the assembled clouds in the sky. The sharp arrows released from the bow of Dhruva Maharaja pierced the shields and bodies of the enemy, like the thunderbolts released by the King of heaven, which dismantle the bodies of the mountains. The heads of those who were cut to pieces by the arrows of Dhruva Maharaja were decorated very beautifully with earrings and turbans. The legs of their bodies were as beautiful as golden palm trees, their arms were decorated with golden bracelets and armlets, and on their heads there were very valuable helmets bedecked with gold. All these ornaments lying on that battlefield were very attractive and could bewilder the mind of a hero. The remaining Yaksas who somehow were not killed, had their limbs cut to pieces by the arrows of the great warrior Dhruva Maharaja. Thus they began to flee, just as elephants flee when defeated by a lion. Dhruva Maharaja, the best of human beings, observed that in that great battlefield not one of the opposing soldiers was left standing with proper weapons. He then desired to see the city of Alakapuri, but he thought to himself, "No one knows the plans of the mystic Yaksas".

In the meantime, while Dhruva Maharaja, doubtful of his mystic enemies, was talking with his charioteer, they heard a tremendous sound, as if the whole ocean was nearby, and they found that from the sky a great dust storm was coming over them from all directions. Within a moment the whole sky was overcast with dense clouds, and severe thundering was heard. There was glittering electric lightning and severe rainfall. In that rainfall there was blood, mucus, pus, stool, urine



Artist: Parikshit Das

and marrow falling heavily before Dhruva Maharaja, and there were trunks of bodies falling from the sky. Next, a great mountain was visible in the sky, and from all directions hailstones fell, along with lances, clubs, swords, iron bludgeons and great pieces of stone. Dhruva Maharaja also saw many big serpents with angry eyes, vomiting forth fire and coming to devour him, along with groups of mad elephants, lions and tigers. Then, as if it were the time of the dissolution of the whole world, the fierce sea with foaming waves and great roaring sounds came forward before him. The demon Yakshas are by nature very heinous, and by their demoniac power of illusion they can create many strange phenomena to frighten one who is less intelligent. When the great sages heard that Dhruva Maharaja was overpowered by the illusory mystic tricks of the demons, they immediately assembled to offer him auspicious encouragement.

All the sages said: Dear Dhruva, "O son of King Uttanapada, may the Supreme Personality of Godhead known as Sharmadghanva and who relieves the distresses of His devotees, kill all your threatening enemies. The holy name of the Lord is as powerful as the Lord Himself. Therefore, simply by chanting and hearing the holy name of the Lord, many men can be fully protected from fierce death without difficulty. Thus a devotee is saved."

When Dhruva Maharaja heard the encouraging

words of the great sages, he performed the *ācamana* by touching water and then took up his arrow made by Lord Narayana and fixed it upon his bow. As soon as Dhruva Maharaja joined the *nārāyaṇāstra* arrow to his bow, the illusion created by the Yakshas was immediately vanquished, just as all material pains and pleasures are vanquished when one becomes fully cognizant of the self. Even as Dhruva Maharaja fixed the weapon made by Narayana *Rṣi* onto his bow, arrows with golden shafts and feathers like the wings of a swan flew out from it. They entered the enemy soldiers with a great hissing sound, just as peacocks enter a forest with tumultuous crowing. Though those sharp arrows dismayed the enemy soldiers, who became almost unconscious, several Yakshas on the battlefield, became enraged and somehow gathering their weapons returned the attack. Just as serpents agitated by Garuda rush towards Garuda with upraised hoods, all the Yaksa soldiers prepared to overcome Dhruva Maharaja with their upraised weapons.

When Dhruva Maharaja saw the Yakshas coming forward, he immediately took his arrows and cut the enemies to pieces. Separating their arms, legs, heads and bellies from their bodies, he delivered the Yakshas to the planetary system which is situated above the sun globe and which is attainable only by first-class *brahmacārīs*, who have never discharged their semen.

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter: 10. Dhruva Maharaja's Fight With the Yakshas » Verses: 1-30 and Chapter 11. Svāyambhuva Manu Advises Dhruva Mahārāja to Stop Fighting » Verses: 1-5 ·

SVAYAMBHUVĀ MANU AND KUVĒRA MEETS DHRUVA

Srīman Purnaprajna Dasa

When Svayambhuva Manu saw how Dhruva was killing so many innocent Yakshas, he came there and said, "My dear son, please stop fighting, for such excessive anger is the path to hellish life. You have already demonstrated your great affection for your brother and so now you should consider how, for one Yaksa's offense, you are killing so many others who are faultless. Such unnecessary killing does not befit our family, which is supposed to know the distinction between religion and irreligion. As a pure devotee of the Lord, your life is meant for exemplary behavior. Therefore, I am surprised that you have undertaken such an abominable task. The Lord is very pleased when His devotee greets other people with tolerance, mercy, friendship and equality."

When Svayambhuva Manu saw that Dhruva was



still dissatisfied because of his brother's death, in spite of being an enlightened devotee, he continued, "My dear son, everything in this material world is a creation of the five principal elements. Under the direction of the Supreme Lord, the three modes of material nature create, maintain and annihilate everything, and thus the Lord is the ultimate cause. In this way the Lord is the killer of everyone, and yet, He is not the killer, because He neutrally awards everyone the results of their fruitive activities. Whatever suffering or happiness one meets with in material life is the result of his own *karma*. My dear Dhruva, these Yaksas are not actually the killers of your brother, for everyone's birth and death is ordained by the Supreme. Therefore, please draw your attention to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and see how the material conception of differentiation, the conception of 'I' and 'mine', is only illusory and temporary. By killing so many Yaksas, you have agitated Kuvera's mind, and he is Lord Shiva's brother. You should thus immediately pacify him with gentle words and prayers, so that his wrath may not affect our family."

After instructing Dhruva and receiving his obeisances, Svayambhuva Manu and the sages returned to their respective abodes. When Kuvera learned that Dhruva's anger had subsided and that he had stopped killing the Yaksas, he went to the scene of battle. While being worshiped by the Yaksas, Kinnaras, and Caranas, Kuvera addressed Dhruva, who stood before him with folded hands: "O sinless one, I am glad that under the instruction from your grandfather you have given up your enmity, for to do so is very difficult. Actually, you have not killed the Yaksas, nor they have killed your brother, for the ultimate cause of creation and annihilation is the eternal time feature of the Supreme Lord. Now I request you to ask me for a benediction without hesitation. Since you are constantly engaged in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, you are the most worthy recipient of all kinds of benedictions."

Dhruva replied, "My dear lord of wealth, may I always have unflinching faith in and constant remembrance of the Supreme Lord. In this way, I will very easily be able to cross over the ocean of nescience, a feat that is very difficult for others to accomplish."

Kuvera was very pleased that Dhruva did not ask for any material benefit and so he awarded this benediction with great happiness. After doing so, Kuvera disappeared from that spot and Dhruva also departed for home. Thereafter, Dhruva performed many sacrifices for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord.

While rendering undeviating devotional service unto the Lord, Dhruva could see how everything is situated within Him, and that He is situated in all living entities. Dhruva ruled the earth for 36,000 years, and while doing so, he diminished the reactions of his pious acts by enjoyment and he reduced his sinful reactions by performing austerities. At the end of this period, Dhruva handed over the kingdom to his son. Considering his body, wives, children, family, army, treasury, palaces and enjoyable pleasure grounds to be creations of the illusory energy, he retired to Badarikashrama in the Himalayas.

—Adopted from the book "Srimad Bhagavatam in story form" by Purnaprajna Das.

DHRUVA ATTAINS VAIKUNTHA

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur

The great devotee Dhruva Maharaja enjoyed many years of his youth in *artha*, *dharma* and *kāma*, with undisturbed senses. At last, realizing that this universe made by maya is like a Gandharva city manufactured in a dream and is caused by ignorance of one's true self, he handed over the throne to his son. Considering that body, wives, children, friends, military power, treasury, female quarters, beautiful parks, and the whole land surrounded by the oceans, would all be destroyed by time, he went to Badarikashrama. Purifying his senses, he bathed in the pure water there and sat in the proper position. He controlled his breathing, withdrew his senses by mental strength and concentrated on the substitute form of the Lord, the universal form. He then began meditating continuously on the actual form of the Lord in *samādhi* after giving up the remembrance of the universal form. Constantly engaged in *bhakti* to the Supreme Lord, he was always decorated by tears of bliss. His heart melted, his hairs stood on end. He could not remember his body since he was free from bodily identification.

Hence Dhruva saw a divine airplane descend from the sky illuminating all directions like the rising moon. In that airplane he saw two persons looking like the best of *devatās*. They were dark in complexion, youthful, four armed and had reddish lotus eyes. They were decorated with fine clothing, crowns, necklaces, bracelets and beautiful earrings and held clubs. Understanding that these were servants of the Lord and His principle associates, Dhruva stood up, but out of bewilderment forgot the proper order of worship. He simply offered respects, and chanted the names of the Lord. Dhruva stood with folded hands and bowed head, absorbed in thinking of the feet of lotus feet of



Artists: Jadurani Dasi, Baradraja Dasa

Lord Krishna. Smiling broadly, the esteemed servants of the Lord, Sunanda and Nanda approached him and spoke as follows:

Sunanda and Nanda said: "O King, all good fortune to you, who pleased the Lord by austerity when you were five years old. Please attentively hear our words. We, associates of the Supreme Lord, creator of all the universes and holder of the *Śārṅga* bow, have come to take you to His abode. You have attained the planet of Vishnu, which is very difficult to achieve, and which the *devatās* see but cannot attain. Reside there O King ! The moon, sun and other planets, the constellations and stars circumambulate that supreme place in a clockwise direction. O Dhruva, stay in that supreme abode of Vishnu, a place not achieved by your forefathers or any other before you and which is worshipped by the whole universe. O immortal one, you are qualified to board this excellent plane sent by the best of famous persons."

On hearing the honey-like words of the two associates from Vaikuntha, Dhruva, who is very dear to the Lord, took his bath, performed his daily rituals, offered respects to the sages and had them bless him. Circumambulating and worshipping the plane, he offered respects to the two associates, and assuming a golden form, he began to board the plane. At that time Dhruva saw death personified approaching him. Placing his foot on the head of death, he boarded that astounding airplane. Drums sounded, the best of Gandharvas sang, and showers of flowers fell on Dhruva's departure.

As he was ascending to the Lord's planet, Dhruva remembered his mother Suniti and thought, "Giving up this abode of Lord Vishnu, the place that no one

can attain, I will go to my unfortunate mother." Understanding the desire of Dhruva, the two associates of the Lord showed him that his mother was also going on that same path on an airplane in front of him. While being praised and showered with flowers by surrounding *devatās* from their own planes, Dhruva Maharaja saw the many planets one after the other. Surpassing the three worlds, including the abodes of the seven sages, the master of Dhruvaloka arrived at the Lord's planet. He reached that shining planet, by whose effulgence the three worlds are illuminated, which those who are not merciful do not reach but which is reached by those who constantly engage in appropriate good actions. The friends of the Lord, those who are peaceful, seeing all things equally, pure, and pleasing to all beings, easily go to the Lord's abode. Thus, pure hearted Dhruva, son of Uttanapada, who was surrendered to Krishna, was the crest jewel of the three planetary systems. Around him, the zodiac belt with planets and stars circles incessantly, like a herd of bulls going around a central pillar with great speed. Seeing the glories of Dhruva, Narada, playing on his *vīṇā*, sang verses in the sacrificial arena of the Pracetas.

nārada uvāca
nūnam sunīteḥ pati-devatāyās
tapah-prabhāvasya sutasya tām gatim
dr̥ṣṭvābhyupāyān api veda-vādinō
naivādhigantum prabhavanti kiṁ nṛpāḥ

Simply by the influence of his spiritual advancement and powerful austerity, Dhruva Maharaja, the son of Suniti, who was devoted to her husband, acquired an exalted position not possible to attain even for the so-called Vedantists or strict followers of the Vedic principles, not to speak of ordinary human beings.

yaḥ paśca-varṣo guru-dāra-vāk-śarair
bhinnena yāto hṛdayena dūyatā
vanam mad-ādeśa-karo 'jitaṁ prabhum
jigāya tad-bhakta-guṇaiḥ parājitaṁ

Just see how Dhruva Maharaja, aggrieved at the harsh words of his stepmother, went to the forest at the age of only five years and under my direction underwent austerity. Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead is unconquerable, Dhruva Maharaja defeated Him with the specific qualifications possessed by the Lord's devotees.



*yaḥ kṣatra-bandhur bhuvi tasyādhirūḍham
anv āruruḥsed api varṣa-pūgaiḥ
ṣaṭ-paśca-varṣo yad ahobhir alpaiḥ
prasādyā vaikunṭham avāpa tat-padam*

Dhruva Maharaja attained an exalted position at the age of only five or six years, after undergoing austerity for six months. Alas, a great *kṣatriya* cannot achieve such a position even after undergoing austerities for many, many years.

By repeatedly hearing with faith the praiseworthy activities of Dhruva, dear to the Lord, which allow one to attain Dhruvaloka, and which are suitable even for the *devatās* and destroy all sins, *bhakti* to the Lord, which destroys all miseries, develops in persons desiring wealth, fame, long life, pious credits, good fortune and a position in heaven. For those desiring greatness, hearing about Dhruva is the cause of greatness. Hearing about Dhruva, the hearer develops good qualities. For those desiring power, hearing about Dhruva is the cause of power. For those who are intelligent, hearing about Dhruva is the cause of respect.

One should recite this great story of famous Dhruva attentively in the morning and in the evening in the company of *brāhmaṇas*. A person who has taken shelter of the Lord should make those with faith hear this story on the full moon, dark moon, on *Dvādaśī*, during *Śravana* month, on *kṣaya-tithis*, *vyatīpāta* days, on *saṅkrantis*, or on Sundays. Being satisfied in himself, without desire for profit, he attains perfection. The *devatās* do not give obstacles to such a merciful protector of the wretched, who gives immortal knowledge to those ignorant of the path of truth.

—From *Sārārtha-darśinī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter: 12. Dhruva Mahārāja Goes Back to Godhead » Verses: 12- 52 by Srila Viṣṇvanātha Cakravartī Thākura.

THE POSITION OF DHRUVALOKA

Srila Sukadeva Goswami

1,300,000 yojanas [10,400,000 miles] above the planets of the seven sages is the place that learned scholars describe as the abode of Lord Vishnu. There the son of Maharaja Uttanapada, the great devotee Maharaja Dhruva, still resides as the life source of all the living entities who live until the end of the creation. Agni, Indra, Prajapati, Kashyapa and Dharma all assemble there to offer him honor and respectful obeisances. They circumambulate him with their right sides toward him. Established by the supreme will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the polestar,

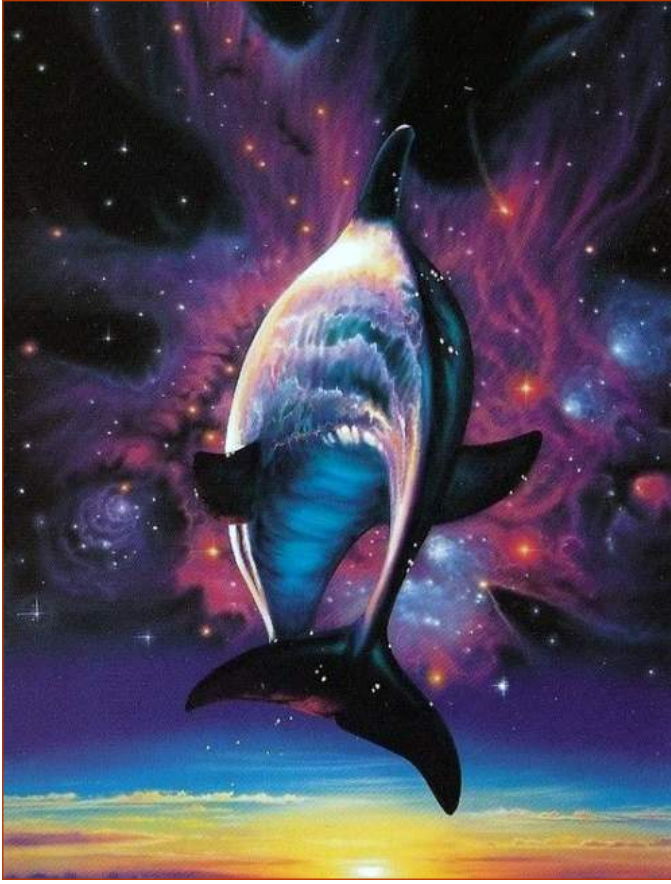
nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

which is the planet of Maharaja Dhruva, constantly shines as the central pivot for all the stars and planets. The unsleeping, invisible, most powerful time factor causes these luminaries to revolve around the polestar without cessation.

When bulls are yoked together and tied to a central post to thresh rice, they tread around that pivot without deviating from their proper positions—one bull being closest to the post, another in the middle, and a third on the outside. Similarly, all the planets and all the hundreds and thousands of stars revolve around the polestar, the planet of Maharaja Dhruva, in their respective orbits, some higher and some lower. Fastened by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to the machine of material nature according to the results of their fruitive acts, they are driven around the polestar by the wind and will continue to be so until the end of creation. These planets float in the air within the vast sky, just as clouds with hundreds of tons of water float in the air or as the great shyena eagles, due to the results of past activities, fly high in the sky and have no chance of falling to the ground.

This great machine, consisting of the stars and planets, resembles the form of a *śiśumāra* [dolphin] in the water. It is sometimes considered an incarnation of Krishna, Vasudeva. Great yogis meditate upon Vasudeva in this form because it is actually visible. This form of the *śiśumāra* has its head downward and its body coiled. On the end of its tail is the planet of Dhruva, on the body of its tail are the planets of the demigods Prajapati, Agni, Indra and Dharma, and at the base of its tail are the planets of the demigods Dhata and Vidhata. Where the hips might be on the *śiśumāra* are the seven saintly sages like Vasistha and Angira. The coiled body of the *Śiśumāra-cakra* turns toward its right side, on which the fourteen constellations from Abhijit to Punarvasu are located. On its left side are the fourteen stars from Pusa to Uttarasadha. Thus its body is balanced because its sides are occupied by an equal number of stars. On the back of the *śiśumāra* is the group of stars known as Ajavithi, and on its abdomen is the Ganges that flows in the sky [the Milky Way].

On the right and left sides of where the loins might be on the *Śiśumāra-cakra* are the stars named Punarvasu and Pusa. Ardra and Ashlesa are on its right and left feet, Abhijit and Uttarasadha are on its right and left nostrils, Śravana and Purvasadha are at its right and left eyes, and Dhanistha and Mula are on its right and left ears. The eight stars from Magha to Anuradha, which mark the southern course, are on the ribs of the left of its body, and the eight stars from Mrigashirsa to Purvabhadra, which mark the northern course, are on



the ribs on the right side. Shatabhisa and Jyestha are on the right and left shoulders.

On the upper chin of the *śiśumāra* is Agasti; on its lower chin, Yamaraja; on its mouth, Mars; on its genitals, Saturn; on the back of its neck, Jupiter; on its chest, the sun; and within the core of its heart, Narayana. Within its mind is the moon; on its navel, Venus; and on its breasts, the Ashvini-kumaras. Within its life air, which is known as *prāṇāpāna*, is Mercury, on its neck is Rahu, all over its body are comets, and in its pores are the numerous stars.

etad u haiva bhagavato viṣṇoḥ sarva-devatāmayaṁ rūpam aharahaḥ sandhyāyām prayato vāgyato nirīkṣamāṇa upatiṣṭheta namo jyotir-lokāya kālāyanāyānimiṣām pataye mahā-puruṣāyābhidhīmahīti.

The body of the *śiśumāra*, as thus described, should be considered the external form of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Morning, noon and evening, one should silently observe the form of the Lord as the *Śiśumāra-cakra* and worship Him with this mantra: "O Lord who has assumed the form of time! O resting place of all the planets moving in different orbits! O master of all demigods, O Supreme Person, I

offer my respectful obeisances unto You and meditate upon You."

The body of the Supreme Lord, Vishnu, which forms the *Śiśumāra-cakra*, is the resting place of all the demigods and all the stars and planets. One who chants this mantra to worship that Supreme Person three times a day—morning, noon and evening—will surely be freed from all sinful reactions. If one simply offers his obeisances to this form or remembers this form three times a day, all his recent sinful activities will be destroyed.

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 5: The Creative Impetus 23. » Chapter 23 The Śiśumāra Planetary Systems » verse: 1-9

UNDERSTANDING DHRUVALOKA

His Divine Grace

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Dhruvaloka, or the polestar, is the abode of Lord Vishnu within this material world. Upon it there is an ocean of milk, and within that ocean there is an island known as Shvetadvipa. It is clearly indicated that this planet is situated above the seven planetary systems of the *ṛṣis*, and because this planet is Vishnuloka, it is worshiped by all other planetary systems.

Although the polestar existed before its occupation by Dhruva Maharaja, it had no predominating deity. Dhruvaloka, our polestar, is the center for all other stars and solar systems, for all of them circle around Dhruvaloka just as a bull crushes grains by walking around and around a central pole. Dhruva wanted the best of all planets, and although it was a childish prayer, the Lord satisfied his demand. A small child may demand something from his father which his father has never given to anyone else, yet out of affection the father offers it to the child; similarly, this unique planet, Dhruvaloka, was offered to Maharaja Dhruva.

The specific significance of this planet is that until the entire universe is annihilated this planet will remain, even during the devastation which takes place during the night of Lord Brahma. There are two kinds of dissolutions, one during the night of Lord Brahma and one at the end of Lord Brahma's life. At the end of Brahma's life, selected personalities go back home, back to Godhead. Dhruva Maharaja is one of them. The Lord assured Dhruva that he would exist beyond the partial dissolution of this universe. Thus at the end of the complete dissolution, Dhruva Maharaja would go directly to *Vaikuṇṭhaloka*, to a spiritual planet in the spiritual sky.

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura comments



in this connection that Dhruvaloka is one of the lokas like Shvetadvipa, Mathura and Dvaraka. They are all eternal places in the kingdom of Godhead, which is described in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (*tad dhāma paramam*) and in the Vedas (*om tad viṣṇoḥ paramam padam sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ*).

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter: 9. Dhruva Maharaja Returns Home » Verses: 25 and 21 » Purport by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

THE GLORIES OF DHRUVA TIRTHA

Srila Rupa Goswami

*ādi-vārāhe
yatra dhruvena santaptam
icchayā paramam tapaḥ
tatra vai snāna-mātreṇa
dhruva-loke mahīyate*

In the *Ādi-varaha Purāṇa* it is said: Simply by bathing there (in Dhruva-tirtha) where Dhruva Maharaja, by his own wish, performed sublime austerities a person becomes glorified on Dhruvaloka.

*dhruva-tīrthe tu vasudhe
yaḥ śraddhām kurute naraḥ
pitṛn santārayet sarvān
pitṛ-pakṣe viśeṣataḥ*

O earth-goddess, a person who performs *śrāddha* at Dhruva-tirtha delivers all his ancestors.

*saura-purāṇe
dhruva-tīrtham iti khyātām
tīrtham mukhyaṁ tataḥ param
yatra snānavato mokṣo
dhruva eva na samśayaḥ*

In the *Saura Purāṇa* it is said: The holy place which is famous as Dhruva-Tirtha is the foremost of all holy places. Simply by bathing there one becomes liberated. Of this there is no doubt.

*skānde mathurā-khaṇḍe —
gayāyām piṇḍa-dānena
yat phalam hi nṛṇām bhavet
tasmāc chata-guṇām tīrthe
piṇḍa-dānād dhruvasya ca*

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

In the *Skanda Purāṇa*, *Mathurā-khaṇḍa*, it is said: The result which is attained by performing *piṇḍa-dāna* in Gaya is a hundred times more when performed in Dhruva tirtha.

*dhruva-tīrthe japo homas
tapo dānam surārcanam
sarva-tīrthāc chata-guṇām
nṛṇām tatra phalam labhet*

Chanting of *mantras*, *agnihotra-yajñas*, austerities, charity, and worship of the demigods are a hundred times more fruitful at Dhruva-tirtha than at all other holy places.

—From Sri Mathura Mahatmya of Srila Rupa Goswami » Verses: 251 to 255
» Translated by Vrajsevika devi dasi .

(Note: Dhruva tirtha is a place in the Madhuvan forest of Sri Vraja Dham.)



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

Dedicated to

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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(Śrīmad-bhāgavata mātmya , Chapter Three)



Śrī Yoginī Ekādaśī

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Ecstatic Dancing Of Lord Chaitanya

Features

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His Divine Grace

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



THE CART FESTIVAL

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur



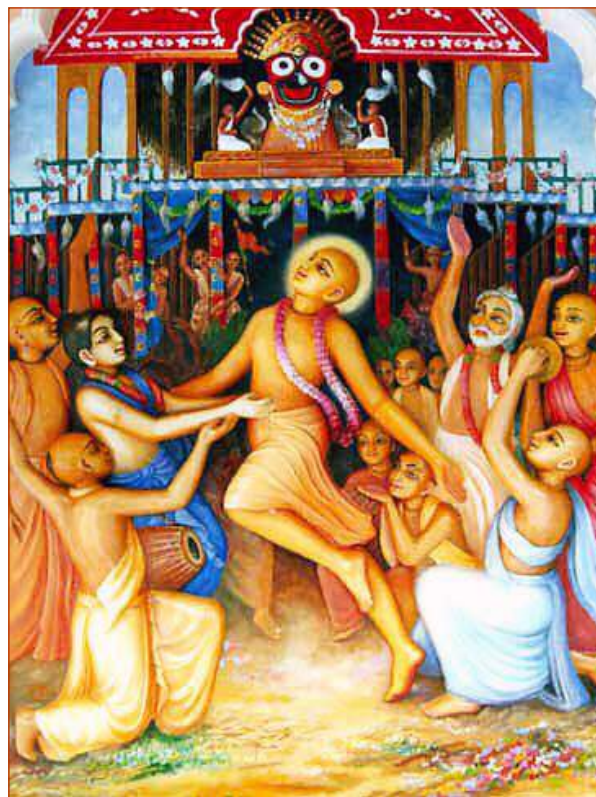
ECSTATIC DANCING OF LORD CHAITANYA

Srila Krishna Das Kaviraja Goswami



**TRANSCENDENTAL COMPETITION BETWEEN
LORD JAGANNATHA AND LORD CHAITANYA**

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur





**LORD CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU IS
NONDIFFERENT FROM SRIMATI RADHARANI**
His Divine Grace

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Lord Sri Krishna is the reservoir of all pleasure, and Srimati Radharani is the personification of ecstatic love of Godhead. These two forms had combined as one in Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. This being the case, Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu revealed His real form to Ramananda Raya. Upon seeing this form, Ramananda Raya lost consciousness in transcendental bliss. Unable to remain standing, he fell to the ground. When Ramananda Raya fell to the ground unconscious, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu touched his hand, and he immediately regained consciousness. But when he saw Lord Chaitanya in the dress of a *sanmyāsī*, he was struck with wonder. After embracing Ramananda Raya, the Lord pacified him, informing him, “But for you, no one has ever seen this form. All the truths about My pastimes and mellows are within your knowledge. Therefore I have shown this form to you.”

Gaurasundara informed Sri Ramananda Raya, “My dear Ramananda Raya, you were actually

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

seeing a separate person with a fair-complexioned body. Actually I am not fair. Being Sri Krishna, the son of Nanda Maharaja, I am blackish, but when I come in touch with Srimati Radharani I become fair-complexioned externally. Srimati Radharani does not touch the body of anyone but Krishna. I taste My own transcendental features by accepting the complexion of Srimati Radharani. Without Radharani, one cannot taste the transcendental pleasure of Krishna’s conjugal love.”

In this regard, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura comments on the *prākṛta-sahajiyā-sampradāya*, which considers Krishna and Lord Chaitanya to possess different bodies. They misinterpret the words *gaura aṅga nahe mora* (*Madhya lila*, 13.287). We can understand that Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is nondifferent from Krishna. Both are the same Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the form of Krishna, the Lord enjoys spiritual bliss and remains the shelter of all devotees, *viṣaya-vigraha*. And in His Gaurāṅga feature Krishna tastes separation from Krishna in the ecstasy of Srimati Radharani. This ecstatic form is Sri Krishna Caitanya.

Sri Krishna is always the transcendental reservoir of all pleasure, and He is technically called *dhīra-lalita*. Srimati Radharani is the embodiment of spiritual energy, personified as ecstatic love for Krishna; therefore only Krishna can touch Her. The *dhīra-lalita* aspect is not seen in any other form of the Lord, including Vishnu and Narayana. Srimati Radharani is therefore known as *Govinda-nandinī* and *Govinda-mohinī*, for She is the only source of transcendental pleasure for Sri Krishna and the only person who can enchant His mind.

— *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* » *Madhya-līlā* » *Madhya 8: Talks Between Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rāmānanda Rāya* » Verse:282-288. ॐ

THE CART FESTIVAL
Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur

After bathing early in the morning, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu saw Jagannatha, Baladeva and Subhadra devi get aboard Their three cars. This function is called *Pāṇḍu-vijaya*. At that time, King Prataparudra took a broom with a golden handle and began to sweep the road.

Lord Jagannatha took permission from the goddess of fortune and then started in the chariot for the Gundica temple. The road to the temple was alongside a broad, sandy beach. On both sides



of the road were residential quarters, houses and gardens. Here the servants called *gaudas* began to pull the cars. In order to perform *sankīrtana* for the pleasure of Lord Jagannatha, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu divided His party into seven divisions. With two *mṛdaṅgas* in each division, there were altogether fourteen *mṛdaṅgas*.

While performing *kīrtana*, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu exhibited various symptoms of transcendental ecstasy, Jagannatha and Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu exchanged Their feelings very blissfully.

— From *Amṛta-pravāha-bhāṣya* of *Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura* » *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* » Chapter 13 » *Madhya lila* ॐ

ECSTATIC DANCING OF LORD CHAITANYA

Srila Krishna Das Kaviraja Goswami

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's dancing before the Ratha-yatra car could be perceived only by pure devotees. Others could not understand. Descriptions of Lord Krishna's uncommon dancing can be found in the revealed scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In the same way Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu danced in great jubilation and inundated all the people with waves of ecstatic love.

When Lord Jagannatha mounted His car, Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu inspired all His devotees to dance in front of it. The Lord performed *kīrtana* for some time and, through His own endeavor, inspired all the devotees to dance. When the Lord Himself wanted to dance, all seven groups combined together. The Lord's devotees—including Srivasa, Ramai, Raghu, Govinda, Mukunda, Haridasa, Govindananda, Madhava and Govinda—all combined together. When Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu desired to jump high while dancing, He placed these nine people in the charge of Svarupa Damodara. These devotees [Svarupa Damodara and the devotees in his charge] sang along with the Lord, and they also ran beside Him. All the other groups of men also sang.

Offering obeisances to the Lord with folded hands, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu raised His face toward Jagannatha and prayed as

*namo brahmaṇya-devāya
go-brāhmaṇa- hitāya ca
jagad-dhitāya kṛṣṇāya
govindāya namo namaḥ*

"Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto Lord Krishna, who is the worshipable Deity for all brahminical men, who is the well-wisher of cows and *brāhmaṇas*, and who is always benefiting the whole world. I offer my repeated obeisances to the Personality of Godhead, known as Krishna and Govinda."

*jayati jayati devo devakī-nandano 'sau
jayati jayati kṛṣṇo vṛṣṇi-varṇa- pradīpaḥ
jayati jayati megha-śyāmalaḥ komalāṅgo
jayati jayati pṛthvī-bhāra- nāśo mukundaḥ*

"All glories unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known as the son of Devaki! All glories to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known as the light of the dynasty of Vṛṣṇi! All glories to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose bodily luster is like that of a new cloud, and whose body is as soft as a lotus flower! All glories to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who appeared on this planet to deliver the world from the burden of demons, and who can offer liberation to everyone!"

*jayati jana-nivāso devakī-janma- vādo
yadu-vara- pariṣat svair dorbhir asyann adharmam
sthira-cara- vṛjina-ghnaḥ susmita-śrī- mukhena
vraja-pura- vanitānām vardhayan kāma-devam*

"Lord Sri Krishna is He who is known as *jana-nivāsa*, the ultimate resort of all living entities, and who is also known as Devaki-nandana or Yashoda-nandana, the son of Devaki and Yashoda. He is the guide of the Yadu dynasty, and with His mighty arms He kills everything inauspicious, as well as every man who is impious. By His presence He destroys all things inauspicious for all living entities, moving and inert. His blissful smiling face always increases the lusty desires of the gopis of Vrindavana. May He be all-glorious and happy!"

*nāhaṁ vipro na ca nara-patir nāpi vaiśya na śūdro
nāhaṁ varṇī na ca gr̥ha-patir no vanastho yatir vā
kintu prodyan-nikhila-paramānanda pūrnāmṛtābdher
gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsāmudāsah*

"I am not a *brāhmaṇa*, I am not a *kṣatriya*, I am not a *vaiśya* or a *śūdra*. Nor am I a *brahmacārī*, a householder, a *vānaprastha* or a *sannyāsī*. I



identify Myself only as the servant of the servant of the servant of the lotus feet of Lord Sri Krishna, the maintainer of the gopis. He is like an ocean of nectar, and He is the cause of universal transcendental bliss. He is always existing with brilliance."

Having recited all these verses from scripture, the Lord again offered His obeisances, and all the devotees, with folded hands, also offered prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu danced and jumped high, roaring like thunder and moving in a circle like a wheel, He appeared like a circling firebrand. Wherever Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu stepped while dancing, the whole earth, with its hills and seas, appeared to tilt. When Chaitanya Mahaprabhu danced, He displayed various blissful transcendental changes in His body. Sometimes He appeared as though stunned. Sometimes the hairs of His body stood on end. Sometimes He perspired, cried, trembled and changed color, and sometimes He exhibited symptoms of helplessness, pride, exuberance and humility. When Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu fell down with a crash while dancing, He would roll on the ground. At such times it appeared that a golden mountain was rolling on the ground. Nityananda

Prabhu would stretch out His two hands and try to catch the Lord when He was running here and there. Advaita Acharya would walk behind the Lord and loudly chant "Haribol! Haribol!" again and again.

Just to check the crowds from coming too near the Lord, the devotees formed three circles. The first circle was guided by Nityananda Prabhu, who is Balarama Himself, the possessor of great strength. All the devotees headed by Kashishvara and Govinda linked hands and formed a second circle around the Lord. Maharaja Prataparudra and his personal assistants formed a third circle around the two inner circles just to check the crowds from coming too near.

When Chaitanya Mahaprabhu danced and jumped high, eight wonderful transformations indicative of divine ecstasy were seen in His body. All these symptoms were visible simultaneously. His skin erupted with goose pimples, and the hairs of His body stood on end. His body resembled the *śimulī* [silk cotton tree], all covered with thorns. Indeed, the people became afraid just to see His teeth chatter, and they even thought that His teeth would fall out. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's whole body flowed with perspiration and at the



same time oozed blood. He made the sounds “jaja gaga, jaja gaga” in a voice choked with ecstasy. Tears came forcefully from the eyes of the Lord, as if from a syringe, and all the people surrounding Him became wet. Everyone saw the complexion of His body change from white to pink, so that His luster resembled that of the mallika flower. Sometimes He appeared stunned, and sometimes He rolled on the ground. Indeed, sometimes His legs and hands became as hard as dry wood, and He did not move. When the Lord fell to the ground, sometimes His breathing almost stopped. When the devotees saw this, their lives also became very feeble. Water flowed from His eyes and sometimes through His nostrils, and foam fell from His mouth. These flowings appeared to be torrents of nectar descending from the moon. The foam that fell from the mouth of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was taken and drunk by Shubhananda because he was very fortunate and expert in relishing the mellow of ecstatic love of Krishna.

After Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had performed His devastating dance for some time, His mind entered into a mood of ecstatic love. After abandoning the dancing, the Lord ordered Svarupa Damodara to sing. Understanding His mind, Svarupa Damodara began to sing as follows.

*sei ta parāṇa-nātha pāinu
yāhā lāgi 'madana-dahane jhuri' genu*

“Now I have gained the Lord of My life, in the absence of whom I was being burned by Cupid and was withering away.”

When this refrain was loudly sung by Svarupa Damodara, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu again began rhythmically dancing in transcendental bliss. The car of Lord Jagannatha began to move slowly while the son of mother Saci went ahead and danced in front. While dancing and singing, all the devotees in front of Lord Jagannatha kept their eyes on Him. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu then went to the end of the procession with the *sāṅkīrtana* performers. His eyes and mind fully absorbed in Lord Jagannatha, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu began to play the drama of the song with His two arms. When Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was dramatically enacting the song, He would sometimes fall behind in the procession. At such times, Lord Jagannatha would come to a standstill. When Chaitanya Mahaprabhu again went forward, Lord Jagannatha's car would slowly start again. Thus there was a sort

of competition between Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Lord Jagannatha in seeing who would lead, but Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was so strong that He made Lord Jagannatha wait in His car. While Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was dancing, His ecstasy changed. Raising His two arms, He began to recite the following

*yaḥ kaumāra-haraḥ sa eva hi varas tā eva caitra-kṣapās
te conmīlita-mālatī-surabhayaḥ prauḍhāḥ kadambānilāḥ
sā caivāsmi tathāpi tatra surata-vyāpāra-līlā-vidhau
revā-rodhasi vetasī-taru-tale cetah samutkañṭhate*

"That very personality who stole away my heart during my youth is now again my master. These are the same moonlit nights of the month of *caitra*. The same fragrance of malati flowers is there, and the same sweet breezes are blowing from the kadamba forest. In our intimate relationship, I am also the same lover, yet still my mind is not happy here. I am eager to go back to that place on the bank of the Reva under the Vetasi tree. That is my desire."

This verse was recited by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu again and again. But for Svarupa Damodara, no one could understand its meaning. Formerly, all the gopis of Vrindavana were very pleased when they met with Krishna in the holy place Kuruksetra. Similarly, after seeing Lord Jagannatha, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu awoke with the ecstasy of the gopis. Being absorbed in this ecstasy, He asked Svarupa Damodara to sing the refrain.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu spoke thus to Lord Jagannatha: “You are the same Krishna, and I am the same Radharani. We are meeting again in the same way that We met in the beginning of Our lives. Although We are both the same, My mind is still attracted to Vrindavana-dhama. I wish that You will please again appear with Your lotus feet in Vrindavana. In Kuruksetra there are crowds of people, elephants and horses, and also the rattling of chariots. But in Vrindavana there are flower gardens, and the humming of the bees and chirping of the birds can be heard. Here at Kuruksetra You are dressed like a royal prince, accompanied by great warriors, but in Vrindavana You appeared just like an ordinary cowherd boy, accompanied only by Your beautiful flute. Here there is not even a drop of the ocean of transcendental happiness that I enjoyed with You in Vrindavana. I therefore request You to come to Vrindavana and enjoy



pastimes with Me. If You do so, My ambition will be fulfilled.”

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu recited many other verses, but people in general could not understand their meaning. The meaning of those verses was known to Svarupa Damodara Goswami, but he did not reveal it. However, Sri Rupa Goswami has broadcast the meaning. While dancing, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu began to recite the following verse, which He tasted in the association of Svarupa Damodara Goswami.

*anyera hṛdaya—mana, mora mana—Vṛndāvana,
‘mane’ ‘vane’eka kari’jāni
tāhān tomāra pada-dvaya, karāha yadi udaya,
tabe tomāra pūrṇa kṛpā māni*

“[The gopis spoke thus:] ‘Dear Lord, whose navel is just like a lotus flower, Your lotus feet are the only shelter for those who have fallen into the deep well of material existence. Your feet are worshiped and meditated upon by great mystic yogīs and highly learned philosophers. We wish that these lotus feet may also be awakened within our hearts, although we are only ordinary persons engaged in household affairs.’”

Speaking in the mood of Srimati Radharani, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, “For most people, the mind and heart are one, but because My mind is never separated from Vrindavana, I consider My mind and Vrindavana to be one. My mind is already Vrindavana, and since You like Vrindavana, will You please place Your lotus feet there? I would deem that as Your full mercy. My dear Lord, kindly hear My true submission. My home is Vrindavana, and I wish Your association there. But if I do not get it, then it will be very difficult for Me to keep My life. My dear Krishna, formerly, when You were staying in Mathura, You sent Uddhava to teach Me speculative knowledge and mystic yoga. Now You Yourself are speaking the same thing, but My mind doesn’t accept it. There is no place in My mind for *jñāna-yoga* or *dhyāna-yoga*. Although You know Me very well, You are still instructing Me in *jñāna-yoga* and *dhyāna-yoga*. It is not right for You to do so. I would like to withdraw My consciousness from You and engage it in material activities, but even though I try, I cannot do so. I am naturally inclined to You only. Your instructions for Me to meditate on You are therefore simply ludicrous. In this way, You are killing Me. It is not very good for You to think of Me as a candidate for Your

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instructions. The gopis are not like the mystic yogīs. They will never be satisfied simply by meditating on Your lotus feet and imitating the so-called yogīs. Teaching the gopis about meditation is another kind of duplicity. When they are instructed to undergo mystic yoga practice, they are not at all satisfied. On the contrary, they become more and more angry with You. The gopis have fallen into the great ocean of separation and are being devoured by the timingila fish of their ambition to serve You. The gopis are to be delivered from the mouths of these timingila fish, for they are pure devotees. Since they have no material conception of life, why should they aspire for liberation? The gopis do not want that liberation desired by yogīs and *jñānīs*, for they are already liberated from the ocean of material existence. It is amazing that You have forgotten the land of Vrindavana. And how is it that You have forgotten Your father, mother and friends? How have You forgotten Govardhana Hill, the bank of the Yamuna and the forest where You enjoyed the *rāsa-līlā* dance? Krishna, You are certainly a refined gentleman with all good qualities. You are well-behaved, softhearted and merciful. I know that there is not even a tinge of fault to be found in You. Yet Your mind does not even remember the inhabitants of Vrindavana. This is only My misfortune, and nothing else. I do not care for My personal unhappiness, but when I see the morose face of mother Yashoda and the hearts of all the inhabitants of Vrindavana breaking because of You, I wonder whether You want to kill them all. Or do You want to enliven them by coming there? Why are You simply keeping them alive in a state of suffering? The inhabitants of Vrindavana do not want You dressed like a prince, nor do they want You to associate with great warriors in a different country. They cannot leave the land of Vrindavana, and without Your presence, they are all dying. What is their condition to be?

*tumi—vrajera jīvana, vraja-rājera prāṇa-dhana,
tumi vrajera sakala sampad
kṛpārdra tomāra mana, āsi’jīyāo vraja-jana,
vraje udaya karāo nija-pada*

“My dear Krishna, You are the life and soul of Vrindavana-dhama. You are especially the life of Nanda Maharaja. You are the only opulence in the land of Vrindavana, and You are very merciful. Please come and let all the residents of Vrindavana live. Kindly keep Your lotus feet again



in Vrindavana.”

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu danced completely absorbed in ecstatic emotion. While looking at the face of Lord Jagannatha, He danced and recited these verses. No one can describe the good fortune of Svarupa Damodara Goswami, for he is always absorbed in the service of the Lord with his body, mind and words. The senses of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu were identical with the senses of Svarupa. Therefore, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu used to become fully absorbed in tasting the singing of Svarupa.

In emotional ecstasy, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu would sometimes sit on the ground and, looking down, would write on the ground with His finger. Fearing that the Lord would injure His finger by writing in this way, Svarupa Damodara checked Him with his own hand. Svarupa Damodara used to sing exactly according to the ecstatic emotion of the Lord. Whenever a particular mellow was being tasted by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Svarupa Damodara would personify it by singing. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu looked upon the beautiful lotus like face and eyes of Lord Jagannatha. Lord Jagannatha was garlanded, dressed with nice garments and adorned with beautiful ornaments. His face was glittering from the rays of sunshine, and the entire atmosphere was fragrant.

An ocean of transcendental bliss expanded in the heart of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and symptoms of madness immediately intensified like a hurricane. The madness of transcendental bliss created waves of various emotions. The emotions appeared like opposing soldiers staging a fight. There was an increase in all the natural emotional symptoms. Thus there were awakening emotions, peacefulness, joined, mixed, transcendental and prevalent emotions, and impetuses for emotion. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's body appeared like a transcendental Himalayan mountain bearing ecstatic emotional flower trees, all of them blooming. The sight of all these symptoms attracted everyone's mind and consciousness. Indeed, the Lord sprinkled everyone's mind with the nectar of transcendental love of Godhead. He sprinkled the minds of the servants of Lord Jagannatha, the government officers, the pilgrim visitors, the general populace and all the residents of Jagannatha Puri. Upon seeing the dancing and ecstatic love of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, everyone became astonished. In their hearts they became infatuated with love of Krishna.

—Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta » Madhya-līlā » Chapter 13: The Ecstatic Dancing of the Lord at Ratha-yātrā » Verse: 67-176. ॐ

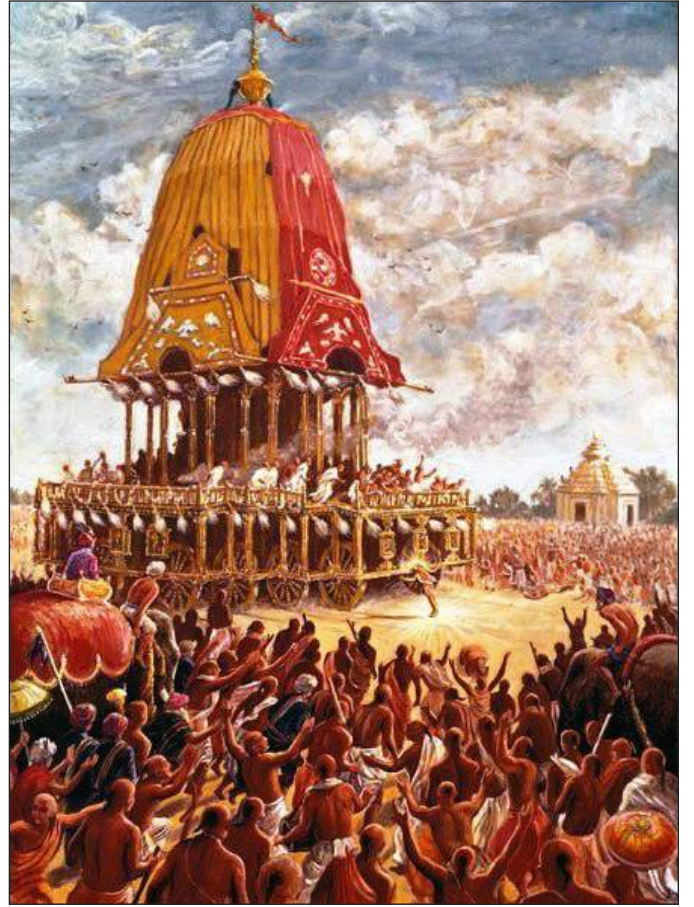
TRANSCENDENTAL COMPETITION BETWEEN LORD JAGANNATHA AND LORD CHAITANYA

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur

After giving up the company of the gopis in Vrindavana, Sri Krishna, the son of Maharaja Nanda, engaged in His pastimes at Dwaraka. When Krishna went to Kuruksetra with His brother and sister and others from Dwaraka, He again met the inhabitants of Vrindavana.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is *rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-suvalita*, that is, Krishna Himself assuming the part of Srimati Radharani in order to understand Krishna. Lord Jagannatha-deva is Krishna, and Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is Srimati Radharani. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's leading Lord Jagannatha toward the Gundica temple corresponded to Srimati Radharani's leading Krishna toward Vrindavana. Sri Ksetra, Jagannatha Puri, was taken as the kingdom of Dwarka, the place where Krishna enjoys supreme opulence. But He was being led by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to Vrindavana, the simple village where all the inhabitants are filled with ecstatic love for Krishna. Sri Ksetra is a place of *aiśvarya-līlā*, just as Vrindavana is the place of *mādhurya-līlā*. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's following at the rear of the ratha indicated that Lord Jagannatha, Krishna, was forgetting the inhabitants of Vrindavana. Although Krishna neglected the inhabitants of Vrindavana, He could not forget them. Thus in His opulent Ratha-yatra, He was returning to Vrindavana.

In the role of Srimati Radharani, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was examining whether the Lord still remembered the inhabitants of Vrindavana. When Chaitanya Mahaprabhu fell behind the Ratha car, Jagannatha-deva, Krishna Himself, understood the mind of Srimati Radharani. Therefore, Jagannatha sometimes fell behind the dancing Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to indicate to Srimati Radharani that He had not forgotten. Thus Lord Jagannatha would stop the forward march of the ratha and wait at a standstill. In this way Lord Jagannatha agreed that without the ecstasy of Srimati Radharani He could not feel satisfied. While Jagannatha was thus waiting, Gaurasundara, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, in His ecstasy of Srimati Radharani, immediately came forward to Krishna. At such times, Lord Jagannatha would proceed ahead very slowly. These competitive exchanges were all part of the love affair between Krishna and Srimati Radharani. In that competition between Lord Chaitanya's



ecstasy for Jagannatha and Jagannatha's ecstasy for Srimati Radharani, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu emerged successful.

—Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta » Madhya-līlā » Chapter 13: The Ecstatic Dancing of the Lord at Ratha-yātrā » From Anubhāṣya commentary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura.



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KING ANGA QUILTS HIS KINGDOM

Sriman Purnaprajna Dasa

From his very birth, Dhruva's son, Utkala, was a liberated soul. He was equipoised when confronted by material dualities, for he could see everything resting in the Supreme Soul and the Supreme Soul resting within everyone's heart. To avoid material entanglement, Utkala remained as an urchin - foolish, deaf, dumb and blind. He was like a flameless fire covered by ashes. Not seeing past his pretense, the elderly family members and ministers considered Utkala to be stupid and mad, so they coronated his younger brother Vatsara.

In the fifth generation after Dhruva, Chaksusha appeared. He became the sixth Manu. Chaksusha begot twelve sons and the youngest of them, Ulmuka, begot six sons, the eldest of whom was named Anga. Once this King Anga performed an *aśvamedha* sacrifice. Even though the *brāhmaṇas* performing the sacrifice were properly qualified and knew how to invite the demigods, surprisingly none of them appeared. The priests then informed King Anga, "O King, although we have properly offered the ghee in sacrifice, the demigods are not accepting it. We know that you collected all the sacrificial paraphernalia with great care and certainly we are chanting the Vedic *mantras* without any fault. Therefore, we cannot understand why the demigods should feel insulted or neglected and thus refuse to accept their sacrificial shares."

Upon hearing this King Anga became aggrieved and took permission to break his silence. He inquired, "My dear *brāhmaṇas*, kindly tell me what offence I committed so that the demigods refuse to come here and accept their shares of the sacrificial offerings". The head priest replied, "O King, in this life you have not been the least bit sinful or offensive - even in your mind. However, in your previous life you performed sinful activities that have now rendered you sonless, in spite of your being otherwise qualified. To remedy this, you should pray to the Supreme Lord for a son and perform a sacrifice specifically for this purpose. In this way, your desire will be fulfilled. When Lord Hari, who is the supreme enjoyer of all sacrifices, comes here to bless you, then all the demigods who are His servants will accompany Him to accept their shares".

Following the wise counsel of the *brāhmaṇas*, King Anga performed that very sacrifice. Whilst oblations were being offered to Lord Vishnu, a

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divine personality appeared from the sacrificial fire. He was dressed in white garments and carried a golden pot filled with sweet rice. After taking permission from the *brāhmaṇas*, King Anga very respectfully received that pot of sweet rice in his joined hands. After smelling it, the King offered a portion to his wife, Sunitha. Eating that food, which had the potency to bring forth a male child, the Queen was impregnated by the King. In due course of time, Sunitha gave birth to a son named Vena. Since Sunitha was the daughter of death personified, her child was expected to be partially in the dynasty of irreligion.

It is said that a daughter generally takes after her father and a son takes after his mother. Therefore, Vena took after his maternal grandfather, and so he grew up to be very irreligious. These circumstances are certainly very unusual, but the fact is that sometimes the Lord arranges an unfortunate wife or bad child for His devotee so that he can become more easily detached from material life.

As a boy, Vena used to go to the forest and unnecessarily kill innocent deer with his bow and arrows. Indeed, his very appearance was frightening to everyone and as soon as they would see him, they would cry out, "Here comes cruel Vena!" The young Vena was so malicious that while playing with boys his age, he would mercilessly kill them as if they were animals meant for slaughter. King Anga used to punish his son in various ways, hoping to reform him, but in spite of all endeavors he was unable to bring Vena to the path of righteousness.

While grieving over his failure to reform his son, King Anga thought, "Persons that have no son are certainly very fortunate. They must have worshiped the Supreme Lord in previous lives so that now they do not have to suffer the unbearable misery of having a bad son. Of course, in another sense, a bad son is better than a good one, for he makes one's life at home intolerable and thus does not allow attachment for house and family to develop the way a good son does. Indeed, a bad son makes the home so hellish that any intelligent man very easily becomes detached from his family life."

King Anga passed sleepless nights while absorbed in such thoughts, and in this way he gradually became completely indifferent to household life. At last, very late one night, he silently got up from bed, leaving his wife who was sleeping soundly. Indeed unseen by others, he left his opulent palace and proceeded to the forest.



King Anga left for the forest

The next morning, when it was understood that the King had left, his priests, ministers, friends and relatives, as well as the ordinary citizens, became very alarmed. The people began to search for Anga everywhere, just as unqualified yogis endeavor to find the Supreme Soul within. Finally, after failing to find their ruler even though they had searched everywhere, the disappointed citizens returned home.

Upon hearing of the emergency caused by the King's absence, the great sages headed by Brigu assembled at the capital city. Knowing the sages to be compassionate and thoughtful of the welfare of the people, the citizens informed them of their plight. These sages knew that in the absence of a king there would be no one to guide and protect the citizens, and they would soon become unregulated and subject to exploitation. After sufficient deliberations, the sages called for Queen Sunitha. With her permission, they installed Vena upon the royal throne, in spite of the ministers' disapproval. It was well known that Vena was very harsh and cruel by nature. When all the thieves and rogues within the kingdom heard of his coronation, they fearfully hid like rats that conceal themselves from snakes.

After ascending to the throne, Vena became even more proud. Completely deluded, he began to think himself to be the greatest of all. Mounting his chariot, King Vena traveled throughout his kingdom

and forbade the *brāhmaṇas* to perform sacrifices or give charity. After being ordered to refrain from performing all kinds of religious activities, the sages once again assembled, for they were very concerned about the great catastrophe that was certainly awaiting them all.

Deliberating amongst themselves, the sages spoke as follows: "Like ants caught in the middle of a log that is burning from both ends, the citizens are in danger due to an irresponsible king on one side and rogues and thieves on the other. Although we had made the unqualified Vena the king during a political crisis, the people are now being threatened with an even greater disaster, for he has blocked their path to spiritual elevation."

—Adopted from the book "Srimad Bhagavatam in story form" by Purnaprajna Das. ॥॥

THE SAGES KILL KING VENA Sri Maitreya R̥ṣi

The sages began to think within themselves: King Vena was born as the son of Sunitha and so he is by nature very wicked. Supporting such a king is like feeding a snake with milk. Now he has become a source of all kinds of problems. We appointed Vena as king to protect the citizens, but now he has become their enemy. Despite this failing, we should at once try to pacify him. By doing so, we may be free from the sinful reactions caused by his wrong-doings. We



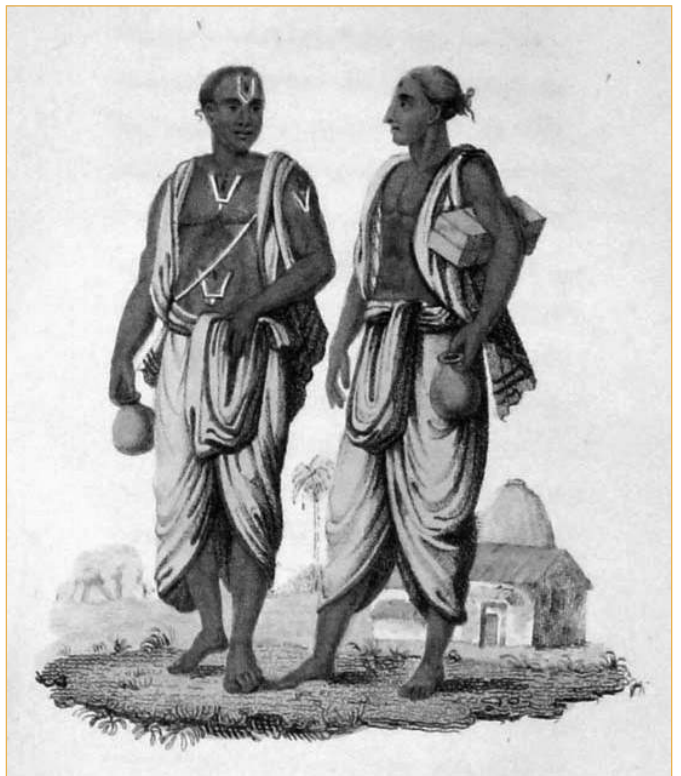
King Vena

When the king protects the citizens from the disturbances of corrupt ministers as well as from thieves and rogues, by virtue of such pious activities, the king has the right to accept taxes given by his subjects. Such a pious king can certainly enjoy himself in this world as well as the next. The king is pious in whose state and cities, the general populace strictly follow the system of *varṇa* and *āśrama* (eight social orders) and where all citizens engage in worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead in that way. O noble one, if the king sees that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the original cause of the cosmic manifestation and the Super-soul within everyone, is worshiped, the Lord will be satisfied. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is worshiped by the great demigods, controllers of universal affairs. When He is satisfied, nothing is impossible to achieve. For this reason, all the demigods, the presiding deities of different planets, as well as the inhabitants of those planets, take great pleasure in offering all kinds of paraphernalia for His worship.

Dear King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, along with the predominating deities, is the enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices in all planets. The Supreme Lord is the sum total of the three Vedas, the owner of everything, and the ultimate goal of all austerity. Therefore, your countrymen should engage in performing various sacrifices for your elevation. Indeed, you should always direct them towards

were completely aware of his malicious nature, yet we enthroned him. If we cannot persuade King Vena to accept our advice, he will be condemned by the citizens, as we now wish to do. In this case, by our prowess we shall burn him to ashes. The great sages, having thus decided, approached King Vena. Subduing their anger, they pacified him with sweet words and then spoke as follows.

The great sages said: "Dear King, we have come here to give you good advice. Kindly hear us with great attention. By doing so, your duration of life, opulence, strength and reputation will increase. Those who live a religious life and follow religious principles by words, mind, body and intelligence are elevated to the heavenly kingdom, a place devoid of miseries. Being thus rid of the material influence, they achieve unlimited happiness in life. O great hero, for this reason you should not be the cause of spoiling the spiritual life of the general populace. If their spiritual life is spoiled because of your activities, you will certainly fall down from your opulent and royal position.





the offering of sacrifices. When all the *brāhmaṇas* engage in performing sacrifices in your kingdom, all the demigods, who are plenary expansions of the Lord, will be very much satisfied by their activities and will give you your desired result. Therefore, O hero, do not stop the sacrificial performances. If you stop them, you will disrespect the demigods."

King Vena replied: "You are not speaking wisely. It is very much regrettable that you are accepting something which is not religious as religious. Indeed, I think you are giving up your real husband, who maintains you, and are searching after some paramour to worship. Those who, out of gross ignorance, do not worship the king, who is actually the Supreme Personality of Godhead, experience happiness neither in this world nor in the world after death. You are so much devoted to the demigods, but who are they? Indeed, your affection for these demigods is exactly like the affection of an unchaste woman who neglects her married life and gives all attention to her paramour.

Lord Vishnu; Lord Brahma; Lord Shiva; Lord Indra; Vayu, the master of air; Yama, the superintendent of death; the sun-god; the director of rainfall; Kuvera, the treasurer; the moon-god; the predominating deity of the earth; Agni, the fire-god; Varuna, the lord of waters, and all others who are great and competent to bestow benedictions or to curse, all reside in the body of the king. For this reason, the king is known as the reservoir of all demigods, who are simply parts and parcels of the king's body. For this reason, O *brāhmaṇas*, you should give up your envy towards me, and, by your ritualistic activities, you should worship me and offer me all paraphernalia. If you are intelligent, you should know that there is no personality superior to me, who can accept the first oblations of all sacrifices."

Thus the King, who lost his intelligence due to his sinful life and deviation from the right path, became bereft of all good fortune. He could not accept the requests of the great sages, which were put before him with respect. Therefore he was condemned. The foolish King, who thought himself very learned, thus insulted the great sages and being brokenhearted by the King's words, the sages became very angry at him.

All the great saintly sages immediately cried: "Kill him! Kill him! He is the most dreadful, sinful person. If he lives, he will certainly turn the whole world into ashes in no time. This impious, impudent man does not deserve to sit on the throne. He is so shameless that he even dared insult the Supreme

Personality of Godhead, Lord Vishnu. Beside this inauspicious King Vena, who would blaspheme the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by whose mercy one is awarded all kinds of fortune and opulence?"

The great sages, thus manifesting their covert anger, immediately decided to kill the King who was already as good as dead due to his blasphemy against the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus without using any weapons, the sages killed King Vena simply by powerful *mantras*. After all the sages returned to their respective hermitages, the mother of King Vena, Sunitha, became very aggrieved because of her son's death. She decided to preserve the dead body of her son by the application of certain herbs and by chanting *mantras*.

Later, the same saintly persons, after taking their bath in the River Sarasvati, began to perform their daily duties by offering oblations into the sacrificial fires. After this, sitting on the bank of the river, they discussed the transcendental person and His pastimes. In those days there were various disturbances in the country that were creating a panic in society. Therefore all the sages began to talk amongst themselves: Since the King is dead and there is no protector in the world, misfortune may befall the people in general on account of rogues and thieves. When the great sages were carrying on their discussion in this way, they saw a dust storm arising from all directions. This storm was caused by the running of thieves and rogues, who were engaged in plundering the citizens.

Seeing the dust storm, the saintly persons could understand that there were a great deal of irregularities due to the death of King Vena. Without government, the state was devoid of law and order, and consequently there was a great uprising of murderous thieves and rogues, who were plundering the riches of the people in general. Although the great sages could subdue the disturbance by their powers - just as they could kill the King - they considered it improper to do so. Thus they did not attempt to stop the disturbance. The great sages then began to think that although a *brāhmaṇa* is peaceful and impartial because he is equal to everyone, still he should not neglect distressed citizens. By such neglect, a *brāhmaṇa*'s spiritual power diminishes, just as water kept in a cracked pot leaks out.

The sages decided that the family line of the saintly King Anga should not be stopped, for in this family the semen was very powerful and the children were inclined to become devotees of the Lord. After due deliberation, the saintly persons and sages churned

the thighs of the dead body of King Vena with great force and according to a specific method. As a result of this churning, a dwarf-like person was born from King Vena's body. This person was named Bahuka, and his complexion was as black as a crow. All his limbs were very short, his arms and legs were short, and his jaw was large. His nose was flat, his eyes reddish, and his hair copper-colored. He was very submissive and meek, and immediately after his birth he bowed down and inquired, "Sirs, what shall I do?" The great sages replied, "Please sit down (nisida)." Thus Nisada, the father of the Naisada race, was born. After his birth, he immediately took charge of all the resultant actions of King Vena's sinful activities. As such, this Naisada class are always engaged in sinful activities like stealing, plundering and hunting. Consequently, they are only allowed to live in the hills and forests.

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter 14. The Story of King Vena » Verse: 10-49. ॐ

WHY DID KING VENA FALL INTO HELL?

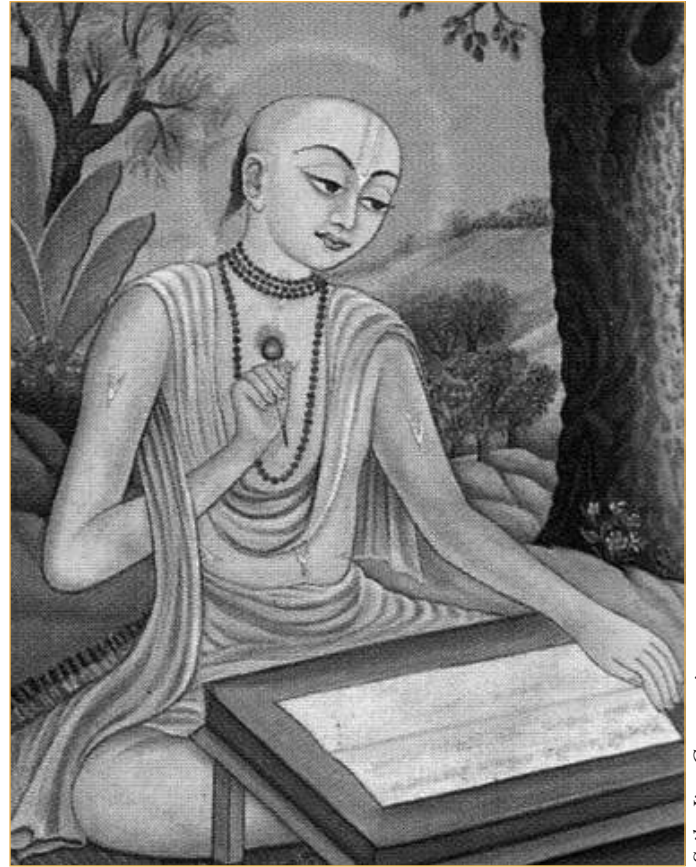
Srila Jiva Goswami

yadi dveṣeṇāpi siddhis tarhi veṇaḥ kim iti narake pātita ity āśaṅkyāha -- katamo 'pi na veṇaḥ syāt pañcānām puruṣaṁ prati [Srimad Bhāgavatam 7.1.32]

puruṣaṁ bhagavantaṁ prati lakṣyīkṛtya pañcānām vairānubandhādīnām madhye veṇaḥ katamo 'pi na syāt | tasya taṁ prati prāsaṅgika-nindā-mātrātmakam vairam na tu vairānubandhaḥ | tatas tīvra-dhyānābhāvāt pāpam eva tatra pratiphalitam iti bhāvaḥ | tato śura-tulya-svabhāvair api tasmin sva-mokṣārthaṁ vairabhāvānuṣṭhāna-sāhasaṁ na kartavyam ity abhipretam | ataeva ye vai bhagavatā proktāḥ [Srimad Bhāgavatam 11.2.34] *ity āder apy ativyāptir vyāhanyate anabhipretatvenā- proktatvāt |*

If simply by hating the Supreme Lord one attains perfection, then why did King Vena fall into hell?

Fearing that someone would raise this objection, *Srimad Bhāgavatam* (7.1.32) explains: "Somehow or other one must consider the form of Krishna very seriously. Then, by one of the five different processes (by enmity, by devotional service, by fear, by affection or by lusty desire, by all of these or any one of them), one can return home, back to Godhead. Atheists like King Vena, however, being unable to think of Krishna's form in any of these five ways, cannot attain salvation."



Srila Jiva Goswami

The words, *katamo 'pi na veṇaḥ syāt pañcānām puruṣaṁ prati* means "Vena did not have one of the five relationships with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, relationships that begin with enmity." This means that Vena did not have a relationship of blaspheming and hating the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Vena's sins bore fruit because he did not engage in intense meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even though he was a demon, he did not hatefully and violently attack the Supreme Personality of Godhead, an attack that would have brought him liberation. That is the meaning.

In *Srimad Bhāgavatam* (11.2.34) it is said: "Even ignorant living entities can very easily come to know the Supreme Lord if they adopt those means prescribed by the Supreme Lord Himself. The process recommended by the Lord is to be known as *bhāgavata-dharma*, or devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

In this way even very great sins perish. This is so even if one is ignorant.

—Amuccheda 322, *Sri Bhakti-sandarbha* of Srila Jiva Goswami » Transaltion by Srila Bhanu Swami. ॐ

HOW WAS KING VENA'S BODY PURIFIED?

His Divine Grace

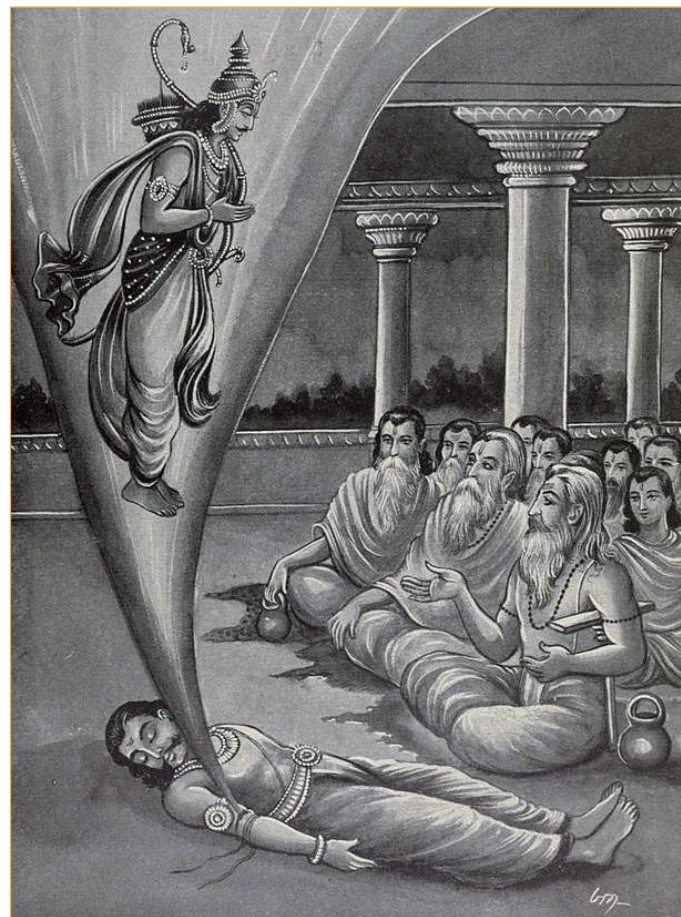
A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

The fact that a person was born by the churning of the thighs of King Vena proves that the spirit soul is individual and separate from the body. The great sages and saintly persons could create another person from the body of the dead King Vena, but it was not possible for them to bring King Vena back to life. King Vena was gone and he had certainly taken another body. The saintly persons and sages were only concerned with the body of Vena because it was a result of the seminal succession in the family of Dhruva Maharaja.

The ingredients to create another body were there in the body of King Vena. By a certain prescribed process, when the thighs of the dead body were churned, another body was produced. Although dead, the body of King Vena was preserved by medicinal herbs, and the *mantras* chanted by King Vena's mother. In this way, all the ingredients for the creation of another body were there. When the body of the person named Bahuka came out of the dead body of King Vena, it was not very astonishing. It was simply a question of knowing how to do it.

From the semen of one body, another body is produced, and the life symptoms are visible due to the soul's taking shelter of this body. One should not think that it was impossible for another body to come out of the dead body of Maharaja Vena. The method adopted by the great sages and scholars, who were learned in Vedic knowledge, was perfect. They removed all the reactions of King Vena's sinful activities by seeing that King Vena first gave birth to Bahuka. After King Vena's body was thus purified, a male and female came out of it, and the great sages could understand that this was an expansion of Lord Vishnu. This expansion, of course, was not *viṣṇu-tattva* but a specifically empowered expansion of Lord Vishnu known as *āveśa*.

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter 14. The Story of King Vena» Verses: 43, Purport. ❀



Prithu born from the dead body of King Vena

DEMIGODS WORSHIP MAHARAJA PRITHU

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

When the sages churned the two arms of the sonless King Vena, a couple appeared. Seeing the couple appear, the sages, knowledgeable of the Vedas, were highly satisfied, and understanding that a portion of the Lord had appeared, they spoke as follows.

The sages said: "This personality is an expansion of the Supreme Lord and the female beside him, maintainer of the world, is an expansion of Lakshmi, inseparable from the Lord. The first among kings, the male will increase his fame. He will be a great King, widely known (*prthu-śravāḥ*), and thus will be named Prithu. The elegant, divine woman with fine teeth, who enhances all ornaments and good qualities, will be named Arci will accept Prithu as her husband."

The *brāhmaṇas* praised him, Gandharvas sang, Siddhas showered flowers and the women of *svarga* danced. Conches, trumpets, drums, and kettledrums sounded in the sky. All the groups of *devatās*, sages and *Pitṛs* went there. Brahma, the guru of the universe, also came, accompanied by *devatās*.

Seeing the mark of the club on Prithu's right hand



and the lotus on his two feet, as well as other lines on his body similar to those on the body of the Supreme Lord, Brahma understood that Prithu, was a portion of the Lord. The *brahmanas*, knowledgeable of the Vedas, arranged for his coronation. People from all over the world brought the ingredients for the bathing ceremony of Prithu. The rivers, oceans, mountains, snakes, cows, birds, animals, sky, earth and all living beings offered gifts.

Prithu, having been bathed, ornamented properly and dressed finely, together with his ornamented wife Arci, appeared like a second fire. Kuvera then offered a golden throne, and Varuna offered an umbrella brilliant as the moon, flowing with water. Vayu offered two *cāmaras*, Dharma offered a garland of fame, and Indra offered an excellent crown. Yama offered a punishing rod. Brahma offered armor made of the *Vedas*, and Sarasvati offered an excellent necklace. Lord Vishnu offered His chakra and Laksmi offered imperishable wealth. Shiva offered a sword with ten moons on the sheath and Durga offered a shield with a hundred moons. Soma offered horses of nectar and Vishvakarma offered a beautiful chariot.

Agni offered a bow made of goat and cow horn. The sun god offered arrows made of light rays. The earth offered shoes with magic power. The sky offered a stream of flowers daily. Those flying in the sky offered drama, singing, music and the power to disappear. The sages offered spiritual blessings. The ocean offered a conch born of himself. The seas, mountains and rivers gave paths for the chariot of Prithu. Bards approached him in order to offer praise. Seeing them praise him, powerful Prithu, son of Vena, smiled and spoke like thunder.

pr̥thur uvāca

*bhoḥ sūta he māgadha saumya vandi!
loke 'dhunāspaṣṭa-guṇasya me syāt
kim āśrayo me stava eṣa yojyatām
mā mayy abhūvan vitathā giro vaḥ*

Prithu said: O suta, magadha and vandi! How can these praises be directed to me, who have unproven qualities at this time? Those words cannot be applied to me but to others. You should not give false praise.

*tasmāt parokṣe 'smad-upaśrutāny alam
kariṣyatha stotram apīcya-vācaḥ
saty uttamaśloka-guṇān uvāde
jugupsitam na stavayanti sabhyāḥ*

In the future, when I am not present, you will be

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

able to praise me sufficiently. Skillful bards, it is the Supreme Lord's pastimes that should be sung. The assembly should not praise a low person like me.

*mahad-guṇān ātmani kartum īśaḥ
kaḥ stāvakaiḥ stāvayate 'sato 'pi
te 'syābhaviṣyann iti vipralabdho
janāvahāsam kumatiṁ na veda*

How can a person who has the qualities of the Lord allow others to praise him? What to speak of someone who does not have His qualities? A fool does not understand that he is being ridiculous, mocked by the promise of having such qualities in the future.

*prabhavo hy ātmanaḥ stotram
jugupsanty api viśrutāḥ
hrīmantāḥ paramodārāḥ
pauruṣam vā vigarhitam*

Persons famous for good qualities, who are modest and generous, detest praise of themselves as if it were criticism of their abilities.

*vayam tv aviditā loke
sūtādyāpi varīmabhiḥ
karmabhiḥ katham ātmānam
gāpayiṣyāma bālavat*

O praisers, I am not yet famous for excellent activities in this world. How can I foolishly accept praise from others for things which I have not done?

— From *Sārārtha-darśinī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter: 15 King Prithu's Appearance and Coronation. Verses: 1-26

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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The Divine Qualities of Maharaja Prithu

Features

**THE DIVINE QUALITIES OF
MAHARAJA PRITHU**
Sri Maitreya Rsi

**PRITHU MAHARAJA MILKS
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BE HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS ?**
*His Divine Grace
A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*





The Coronation of King Prithu. Artists - Muralidhara Dasa

THE DIVINE QUALITIES OF MAHARAJA PRITHU *Sri Maitreya Rsi*

The humility of King Prithu's nectarean speeches pleased the reciters very much. Then again they continued to praise the King highly with exalted prayers, as they had been instructed by the great sages.

Dear King, you are a direct incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Vishnu, and by His causeless mercy you have descended on this earth. Therefore it is not possible for us to actually glorify your exalted activities. Although you have appeared through the body of King Vena, even great orators and speakers like Lord Brahma and other demigods cannot perfectly describe Your glorious activities. Although we are unable to glorify you adequately, we nonetheless have a transcendental taste for it. We shall try to glorify you according to the instructions received from authoritative sages and scholars. Whatever we speak, however, is always inadequate and very insignificant, dear King, because you are a

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

direct incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and all your activities are liberal and ever laudable. This King, Maharaja Prithu, is the best amongst those who are following religious principles. As such, he will engage everyone in the pursuit of religious principles and thus protect those principles. He will also be a great chastiser to the irreligious and atheistic.

This King alone, in his own body, in due course of time will be able to maintain all living entities and keep them in a pleasant condition by manifesting himself as different demigods who perform various activities in universal maintenance. Thus he will maintain the upper planetary system by inducing the citizens to perform Vedic sacrifices. In due course of time he will also maintain this earthly planet by discharging proper rainfall.

This King Prithu will be as powerful as the sun-god, and just as the sun-god equally distributes sunshine to everyone, King Prithu will distribute his mercy equally. Similarly, just as the sun-god evaporates water for eight months and, during the rainy season, returns it profusely, this King will also exact taxes from the citizens and return these monies in times of need.

This King Prithu will be very, very kind to all citizens. Even though a poor person may trample on the King's head by violating the rules and regulations, the King, out of his causeless mercy, will be forgetful and forgiving. As a protector of the world, he will be as tolerant as the earth itself. When there is no rainfall and the citizens are in great danger due to the scarcity of water, this royal Personality of Godhead will be able to supply rains exactly like the heavenly King Indra. Thus he will very easily be able to protect the citizens from drought.

This King, Prithu Maharaja, by virtue of his affectionate glances and beautiful moonlike face, which is always smiling with great affection for the citizens, will enhance everyone's peaceful life. No one will be able to understand the policies he will follow. His activities will also be very confidential, and it will not be possible for anyone to know how he will make every activity successful. His treasury will always remain unknown to everyone. He will be the reservoir of unlimited glories and good qualities, and his position will be maintained and covered just as Varuna, the deity of the seas, is covered all around by water.

King Prithu was born of the dead body of King



Vena as fire is produced from *araṇi* wood. Thus King Prithu will always remain just like fire, and his enemies will not be able to approach him. Indeed, he will be unbearable to his enemies, for although staying very near him, they will never be able to approach him but will have to remain as far away. No one will be able to overcome the strength of King Prithu.

King Prithu will be able to see all the internal and external activities of every one of his citizens. Still no one will be able to know his intelligence system. He himself will remain neutral regarding all matters of glorification or vilification paid to him. He will be exactly like the life-air, the life force within the body, which is exhibited internally and externally but is always neutral to all affairs. Since this King will always remain on the path of piety, he will be neutral to both his son and the son of his enemy. If the son of his enemy is not punishable, he will not punish him, but if his own son is punishable, he will immediately punish him. Just as the sun-god expands his shining rays up to the Arctic region without impedance, the influence of King Prithu will cover all tracts of land up to the Arctic region and will remain undisturbed as long as he lives.

This King will please everyone by his practical activities, and all of his citizens will remain very satisfied. Because of this the citizens will be very glad to accept him as their ruler. The King will be firmly determined and always situated in truth. He will be a lover of the brahminical culture and will render all service to old men and give shelter to all surrendered souls. Giving respect to all, he will always be merciful to the poor and innocent. The King will respect all women as if they were his own mother, and he will treat his own wife as the other half of his body. He will be just like an affectionate father to his citizens, and he will treat himself as the most obedient servant of the devotees who always preach the glories of the Lord. The King will consider all embodied living entities as dear as his own self, and he will always be increasing the pleasures of his friends. He will intimately associate with liberated persons, and he will be a chastising hand to all impious persons.

This King is the master of the three worlds as he is directly empowered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is without change, and he is an incarnation of the Supreme known as a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*. Being a liberated soul and completely learned, he sees all material varieties

as meaningless because their basic principle is nescience. This King, being uniquely powerful and heroic, will have no competitor. He will travel around the globe on his victorious chariot, holding his invincible bow in his hand and appearing exactly like the sun, which rotates in its own orbit from the south. When the King travels all over the world, other kings, as well as the demigods, will offer him all kinds of presentations. Their queens will also consider him the original king, who carries in His hands the emblems of club and disc, and will sing of his fame, for he will be as reputable as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

This King, the protector of the citizens, is certainly extraordinary among monarchs and is equal to the *Prajāpati* demigods. To sustain the citizens, he will milk the earth, which is like a cow. Not only that, he will also level the surface of the earth with the pointed ends of his bow, breaking all the hills exactly as King Indra, the heavenly King, breaks mountains with his powerful thunderbolt. When the lion travels in the forest with its tail turned upward, all menial animals hide themselves. Similarly, when King Prithu will travel over his kingdom and twang the string of his bow, which is made of the horns of goats and bulls and is irresistible in battle, all demoniac rogues and thieves will flee helter-skelter and hide themselves. At the source of the River Sarasvati, this King will perform one hundred sacrifices known as *aśvamedha*. In the course of the last sacrifice, the heavenly King Indra will steal the sacrificial horse.

This King Prithu will meet Sanat-kumara, one of the four Kumaras, in the garden of his palace compound. The King will worship him with devotion and will be fortunate to receive instructions by which one can enjoy transcendental bliss. In this way when the chivalrous activities of King Prithu come to be known to the people in general, King Prithu will always hear about himself and his uniquely powerful activities. No one will be able to disobey the orders of Prithu Maharaja. After conquering the world, he will completely eradicate the threefold miseries of the citizens. Then he will be recognized all over the world. At that time both the *suras* and the *asuras* will undoubtedly glorify his magnanimous activities.

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter 16. Praise of King Prithu by the Professional Reciters
» Verse: 1-27. ॐ



PRITHU MAHARAJA MILKS THE EARTH PLANET

Sriman Purnaprajna Das

Prior to the appearance of King Prithu, there had been a great scarcity of food grains and thus the citizens had become emaciated due to starvation. At the time of Maharaja Prithu's coronation, the subjects took the opportunity to approach him.

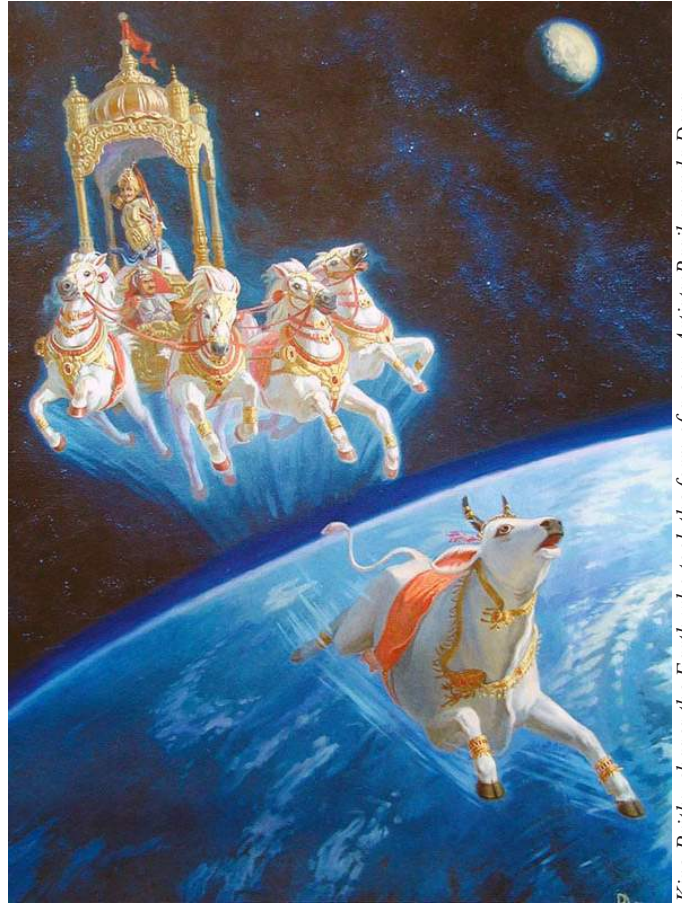
The people submitted this petition: "My dear King, just as a tree gradually dries up when there is a fire in the hollow of its trunk, so we are withering away due to the fire of hunger in our stomachs. You are the protector of surrendered souls and so we have come to your shelter. Please give us occupational engagements and then satisfy our hunger by the proper distribution of food grains lest we soon die of starvation."

After hearing the citizens' anxious pleas and seeing their pitiable condition, King Prithu contemplated the problem for a long time to see if he could find out the underlying causes. At last, Prithu Maharaja concluded that the lack of food was not caused by the peoples' unwillingness to work, but rather it was due to the fact that the earth itself was not producing sufficient grains.

With this in mind, Prithu Maharaja took his bow and aimed a powerful arrow at the earth. When Bhumi, the goddess of the earth, saw that King Prithu was prepared to kill her, she became so frightened that her entire body began to tremble. Taking the form of a cow, she hastily fled, and upon seeing this, King Prithu became so angry that his eyes began to glow like the rising sun.

After placing his arrow upon the bowstring, Prithu Maharaja began chasing the cow shaped earth wherever she went. Being pursued by the threatening King, Bhumi ran to all places, both in outer space, in heaven and on the earth. Finally, however, when she saw that there was no hope of escape from the son of Vena, she gave up.

With an aggrieved heart, Bhumi submitted herself to Prithu Maharaja and begged, "O King, you are the shelter of the surrendered souls. Please be merciful and spare me. I have not committed any sinful activities thus I do not understand why you want to kill me. You are supposed to be the knower of religious principles. Why then are you so envious that you are prepared to kill me, a helpless woman? Even if a woman commits some sinful act, she should not be punished by anyone, and so what to speak of you, who are so merciful to the poor and unfortunate.



King Prithu chases the Earth who took the form of a cow. Artists: Rasikananda Dasa

"My dear King, I am just like a strong boat, because all the living entities rest upon me. If you break me to pieces then how will you be able to protect your citizens from drowning in the Garbhodaka Ocean?"

King Prithu replied, "My dear earth, you have disobeyed my orders. As one of the demigods, you have accepted your share of the sacrificial offerings, but in return you have not produced sufficient food grains. Although you are eating green grass daily, you are not filling your udders so that we can utilize your milk.

You have willfully committed this offense and so I must kill you. You have lost your good intelligence and so, despite my order, you do not deliver the seeds of herbs and grains that had been created by Lord Brahma and are now being hidden within you. Because of this I will take my arrows, and after cutting you to pieces, I will satisfy the hungry citizens with your flesh.

Any cruel person who has no compassion for others and thus is only interested in his personal maintenance – whether he be a man, woman or enuch – deserves to be killed by the king. Because you have become so proud, I will cut you into small pieces like grain and then nourish the entire



population by the strength of my personal mystic prowess.”

Because of his great anger, as he spoke, King Prithu looked just like the fearsome Yamaraja, punisher of all wrong doers.

Hearing his words, Dhara, the earth, who was still trembling due to fear, replied as follows: “My dear lord, I am one of the parts and parcels of your gigantic universal body. You have created me as a resting place for the living entities, so I am perplexed as to why you now want to kill me. Previously, in the form of Varaha, you rescued me from the depths of the Garbhodaka Ocean, and for this reason, you received the name Dharadhaara. Now, however, you are prepared to kill me with your sharp arrows, and so I am bewildered by your activities.”

Even after hearing the earth’s prayers, Maharaja Prithu was not pacified, and thus his lips trembled with rage. When she saw this, the earth continued speaking: “My lord, please suppress your anger and hear what I have to say, for a learned person will take the essence of knowledge from anyone, just as a bumblebee collects honey from each and every flower.

“My dear King, the seeds, roots, herbs and grains that had been created by Lord Brahma were being utilized by the non-devotees, as was my very self. Because there was no proper king to punish these rascals and thieves that were utilizing the food grains for their sense gratification instead of the performance of sacrifice. I hid them within me. Due to being stored for a long time, these seeds have certainly deteriorated and so you should immediately arrange to retrieve them for utilization as recommended by *śāstras* and the previous *ācāryas*. O great hero, if you desire to supply sufficient grains and other food to the citizens, then you should arrange for a suitable calf, pot and milkman. Due to the great affection that I will feel for my calf, you will be able to take from me as much of the necessities of life as you like. In addition, if you level my surface – that will also help in the production of food by increasing the retention of water, even if there is sometimes less rainfall.”

Accepting this proposal King Prithu became peaceful. Thereafter, he transformed Svayambhuva Manu into a calf and milked all the herbs and grains from the cow-shaped earth, keeping them within his cupped hands. Then, following in King Prithu’s footsteps, other intelligent beings proceeded to

milk the earth to obtain whatever they desired.

The great sages transformed Brihaspati into a calf and made the senses into a pot. In this way they milked the earth of all kinds of Vedic knowledge for the purpose of purifying everyone’s mind, words and hearing. The demigods transformed Indra into a calf and milked of the earth the *soma* beverage, which they kept in a golden pot. Due to the drinking *soma-rasa*, the demigods became very powerful in terms of bodily, sensual and mental strength.

The Daityas transformed Prahlada into a calf and then extracted various kinds of liquor and beer, which they kept in an iron pot. The Gandharvas and Apsaras transformed Visvavasu into a calf and drew out milk in the form of sweet music and heavenly beauty, putting it into a lotus flower pot. The inhabitants of Pitraloka made Aryama into a calf and then milked of the earth *kavya*, which is food offered to the ancestors, and they put it into an unbaked earthen pot.

Thereafter, the Siddhas and Vidyadharas transformed the great sage Kapila into a calf and milked the earth of mystic powers, which they placed in a pot that had been made out of the entire sky. Others, such as Kimpurusas, made the demon Maya into a calf and milked the power of appearing and disappearing at will, called *antardhana*.

Next, the Yaksas, Raksasas, Bhutas (ghosts), and Pisacas (witches), who are all accustomed to eating flesh, transformed the Rudra incarnation of Lord Shiva into a calf and milked beverages made from blood, which they placed into a pot made of skulls. Then cobras and other snakes without hoods, as well as scorpions and other poisonous animals, transformed Taksaka into a calf and took poison from the earth and kept it within their snake holes.

The four-legged animals made Nandi, the bull-carrier of Lord Shiva, into a calf and thus got green grass that they put into a pot made from the forest. Ferocious animals made a calf from a lion and were thus able to get flesh from the earth. The birds made Garuda into a calf and then took from the earth various moving insects and non-moving plants and grasses. The trees made a calf out of a banyan tree and thus derived milk in the form of many delicious juices. The mountains transformed the Himalayas into a calf and then milked varieties of minerals from the earth and placed them into a pot that had been made from the peaks of hills.

Thus, during the reign of King Prithu, the earth supplied all the necessities of life to every living creature. Because of this, Maharaja Prithu became



Prithu Maharaja Levels the Earth. Artists: Mukunda Murari Dasa

very satisfied with the earth and developed affection for her just as if she were his own daughter. According to her request, the king leveled the surface of the earth by breaking up the hills with his powerful bow, and after doing so, he divided the land into various types of residential quarters. These sections were then allotted for different purposes, and thus Prithu Maharaja established numerous towns, villages, agricultural fields and mining areas.

Before the era of Prithu Maharaja, there were no planned cities, villages, farms or pasturing grounds, for everyone had simply constructed their residences according to their own convenience.

—Adopted from the book “Srimad Bhagavatam in story form” by Purnaprajna Das. ❧

MAHARAJA PRITHU AND SRI NAVADVIPA DHAM Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakur

Prithu Maharaja was leveling the rough places of the earth by cutting down the hills. As he began leveling this area, a great effulgence came forth. When the workers told this to Prithu Maharaja, he came to see the phenomenon. As he was a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*, an empowered incarnation,

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by meditation he understood that this place was Navadvipa. He kept the glories of this place secret at that time and ordered that a kunda be established there. This kunda thus became celebrated as Prithukunda throughout Navadvipa-dhama. The villagers felt indescribable bliss by drinking the pure water of this kunda.

Later, King Laksmana Sena dug out the kunda and made it bigger and deeper. Desiring to deliver his forefathers, he named it Ballal-dighi [after his father, Ballal Sena].

(Although it is no longer visible, Prithukunda was formerly situated between Murari Gupta's house and the Chaitanya Matha. When one leaves Srivasa Angana and walks away from Mayapur on the Bhaktisiddhanta Road, just before reaching the Chaitanya Matha a large paddy field is seen, which marks the location of Prithukunda).

— Sri Navadvip Dham Mahatmya, Chapter Six, Śrī Gaṅgānagara, Prithukunḍa, Sīmantadvīpa, Śaraśāṅgā, Viśrāma-sthāna. ❧

HOW WOULD THE WORLD BE HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS ?

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

The planet earth is called *vasundharā*. The word *vasu* means "wealth," and *dharā* means "one who holds." All creatures within the earth fulfill the necessities required for human beings, and all living entities can be taken out of the earth by the proper means. As suggested by the planet earth, and accepted and initiated by King Prithu, whatever is taken from the earth—either from the mines, from the surface of the globe or from the atmosphere—should always be considered the property of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and should be used for *yajña*, Lord Vishnu. As soon as the process of *yajña* is stopped, the earth will withhold all productions—vegetables, trees, plants, fruits, flowers, other agricultural products and minerals.

As confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā*, the process of *yajña* was instituted from the beginning of creation. By the regular performance of *yajña*, the equal distribution of wealth and the restriction of sense gratification, the entire world will be made peaceful and prosperous. As already mentioned, in this age of Kali the simple performance of *saṅkīrtana-yajña*—the holding of festivals as initiated by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness—



should be introduced in every town and village. Intelligent men should encourage the performance of *sankīrtana-yajña* by their personal behavior. This means that they should follow the process of austerity by restricting themselves from illicit sex life, meat-eating, gambling and intoxication. If the intelligent men, or the *brāhmaṇas* and intellectuals of society, would follow these rules and regulations, certainly the entire face of this present world, which is in such chaotic condition, would change, and people would be happy and prosperous.

Just as a cow cannot deliver sufficient milk without being affectionate to her calf, the earth cannot produce sufficient necessities without feeling affection for those who are Krishna conscious. Even though the earth's being in the shape of a cow may be taken figuratively, the meaning herein is very explicit. Just as a calf can derive milk from a cow, all living entities—including animals, birds, bees, reptiles and aquatics—can receive their respective foods from the planet earth, provided that human beings are not *asat*, or *adhyta-vrata*, as we have previously discussed. When human society becomes *asat*, or ungodly, or devoid of Krishna consciousness, the entire world suffers. If human beings are well behaved, animals will also receive sufficient food and be happy. The ungodly

human being, ignorant of their duty to give protection and food to the animals, kills and eat them to compensate for the insufficient production of grains. Thus no one is satisfied, and that is the cause for the present condition in today's world.

—*Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter 18: Pṛthu Mahārāja Milks the Earth Planet» Verse:9, 10 and 13.* ❀



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Deliverance of Putana

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His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



**DELIVERANCE OF PUTANA***Srila Sukadeva Goswami*

There was great jubilation all over Vrindavan upon Krishna's birth. Everyone was overwhelmed with joy. Maharaja Nanda, King of Vraja, joyfully performed the birth ceremony for his child. During this great festival, Nanda Maharaja gave everyone in charity whatever they desired. After the festival, Nanda Maharaja put the cowherd men in charge of protecting Gokula, and then he went to Mathura to pay official taxes to Kamsa. In Mathura, Nanda Maharaja met his brother Vasudeva, who praised Nanda Maharaja's good fortune because he knew that Krishna had accepted Nanda Maharaja as His father. Vasudeva inquired from Nanda Maharaja about the welfare of the child and Nanda Maharaja informed him all about Vrindavan. Vasudeva was very happy to hear this, although he also expressed grief because all of Devaki's children had been killed by Kamsa. Nanda Maharaja consoled Vasudeva by saying that in this world, everything happens according to destiny. One who has this knowledge, never grieves. Anticipating many disturbances in Gokula, Vasudeva then advised Nanda Maharaja not to wait in Mathura, but to return to Vrindavan as soon as possible.

Thus Nanda Maharaja took leave of Vasudeva and with the other cowherd men, returned to Vrindavan on their bullock carts. On the way home, Nanda Maharaja considered that what Vasudeva had said must be true. It is destined that some disturbances might be due in Gokula. As Nanda Maharaja thought about the danger for his beautiful son, Krishna, he was afraid, and he took shelter at the lotus feet of Lord Narayana. By this time, the evil King Kamsa had engaged a fierce woman named Putana to kill all the new born children in the towns, cities and villages of Mathura. While Nanda Maharaja was returning to Gokula, these nefarious activities were going on.

According to her desire, Putana *rākṣasī* could travel anywhere, including outer space. One day, by mystic power, she converted herself into a very beautiful woman and entered Gokula, the abode of Nanda Maharaja. Her hips were full, her breasts were large and firm, seeming to overburden her slim waist, and she was dressed very nicely. Her hair, adorned with a garland of mallika flowers, was scattered around her beautiful face. Her earrings were brilliant, and as she glanced upon everyone smiling very attractively. Her beauty drew the attention of all the inhabitants of Vraja, especially the men. When the gopis saw her, they thought that the beautiful goddess of fortune, holding a lotus flower in her hand, had come to see her husband, Krishna.

The *rākṣasī* Putana was expert in killing small children, and she searched for them everywhere. In this way, she entered the house of Nanda Maharaja. Surprisingly, she was not obstructed, because she had been sent by the superior potency of the Lord. Without asking anyone's

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permission, she entered Nanda Maharaja's room, and saw the child sleeping on the bed. Like a powerful fire covered by ashes, Krishna's unlimited power was concealed. Putana could somehow understand that this child was not ordinary, but was meant to kill all demons.

Lying on the bed like an ordinary child, the all-pervading Supersoul Lord Sri Krishna understood that the witch Putana had come to kill Him. Therefore, as if afraid of her, Krishna closed His eyes. Thus Putana placed upon her lap, the child who was meant for her destruction, just as an unintelligent person places a sleeping snake on his lap, thinking it to be a rope. Though she looked like a very affectionate mother, Putana's heart was fierce and cruel. Thus she resembled a sharp sword in a soft sheath. Although they saw her in the room with the child, Yashoda and Rohini did not stop her but remained silent; overwhelmed by her beauty and seeing her apparent motherly affection.

On that very spot, the fiercely dangerous *rākṣasī* took Krishna on her lap and put her breast into His mouth. The nipple of her breast was smeared with a dangerous, immediately effective poison. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, became very angry at her and took hold of her breast, strongly squeezed it very with both hands and began to suck. In this way, He drew out both the poison and her life airs. Unbearably pressed in every vital point, Putana began to cry out, "Please leave me, leave me! Suck my breast no longer!" Perspiring, her eyes wide open and her arms and legs flailing, she cried very loudly again and again. As Putana screamed loudly and forcefully, the earth with its mountains, and outer space with its planets all trembled. The lower planets and all directions vibrated, and people fell down, fearing that thunderbolts were falling upon them. Putana was very much afflicted because her breast was violently sucked by Krishna, and she thus lost her life. Her mouth open wide, her arms and legs spread-eagled, and her hair disheveled, Putana, assuming her original form as a *rākṣasī*, fell into the pasturing grounds of Vraja, just as Vritrasura had fallen when killed by the thunderbolt of Indra.

When the gigantic body of Putana fell to the ground, it smashed all the trees within a radius of twelve miles. Appearing in a gigantic body, she was certainly extraordinary. The *rākṣasī*'s mouth was full of teeth, which resembled the front of a plow. Her nostrils were deep like mountain caves, and her breasts resembled big slabs of stone fallen from a hill. Her scattered hair was the color of copper. The sockets of her eyes appeared like deep blind wells, her fearful thighs resembled the banks of a river, her arms, legs and feet seemed like big bridges, and her abdomen appeared like a dried-up lake. The hearts, ears and heads of the cowherd men and women were already shocked by the *rākṣasī*'s screaming, and when they saw the fierce wonder of her body, they were even more frightened. However, the child Krishna was fearlessly playing on her breast. When the gopis saw the



child's wonderful activity, they immediately came forward with great jubilation and picked Him up.

Thereafter, mother Yashoda and Rohini, along with the other elderly gopis performed the ritual of purification and protection for the child Krishna by waving the tail-hair of a cow. The child was thoroughly washed with cow urine and then smeared with the dust raised by the walking of the cows. Then different names of the Lord were applied with cow dung on twelve different parts of His body, beginning with the forehead, as done in applying tilaka. In this way, the child was given protection. The gopis first executed the process of *ācamana*, drinking a sip of water from the right hand. They purified their bodies and hands with the *nyāsa*-mantra and then applied the same mantra upon the body of the child.

The gopis, following the proper system, protected their child Krishna with this mantra: 'May Aja protect Your legs, may Maniman protect Your knees, Yajna Your thighs, Acyuta the upper part of Your waist, and Hayagriva Your abdomen. May Keshava protect Your heart, Isha Your chest, the sun-god Your neck, Vishnu Your arms, Urukrama Your face, and Ishvara Your head. May Cakri protect You from the front; may Sri Hari, Gadadhari, the carrier of the club, protect You from the back; and may the carrier of the bow, who is known as the enemy of Madhu, and Lord Ajana, the carrier of the sword, protect Your two sides. May Lord Urugaya, the carrier of the conchshell, protect You from all corners; may Upendra protect You from above; may Garuda protect You on the ground; and may Lord Haladhara, the Supreme Person, protect You on all sides. May Hrisikesha protect Your senses, and Narayana Your life air. May the master of Shvetadvīpa protect the core of Your heart, and may Lord Yogeshvara protect Your mind. May Lord Prsnigarbha protect Your intelligence, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead Your soul. While You are playing, may Govinda protect You, and while You are sleeping may Madhava protect You. May Lord Vaikuntha protect You while You are walking, and may Lord Narayana, the husband of the goddess of fortune, protect You while You are sitting. Similarly, may Lord Yajñabhuṅk, the fearful enemy of all evil planets, always protect You

while You live life.'

The evil witches known as Dakinis, Yatudhanis and Kusmandas are the greatest enemies of children, and the evil spirits like Bhutas, Pretas, Pisacas, Yaksas, Raksasas and Vinayakas, as well as witches like Kotara, Revati, Jyestha, Putana and Matrka, are always ready to give trouble to the body, the life air and the senses, causing loss of memory, madness and bad dreams. Like the most commonly encountered evil planets, they all create great disturbances, especially for children. However, one can vanquish them all simply by uttering Lord Vishnu's name, for when Lord Vishnu's name resounds, all of them become afraid and go away.

All the gopis, headed by mother Yashoda, were full of maternal affection for Krishna. After they chanted mantras to protect the Him, mother Yashoda breast-fed Krishna and then lay Him down on His bed. Meanwhile, all the cowherd men, headed by Nanda Maharaja, who were returning from Mathura, saw on the way the gigantic body of Putana lying dead. They were struck with great wonder! Nanda Maharaja and the other gopas exclaimed: "My dear friends, you must know that Anakadundubhi, Vasudeva, has become a great saint or a master of mystic power. Otherwise how could he have foreseen and predicted this calamity?"

Using axes, the inhabitants of Vraja cut the gigantic body of Putana into pieces. Then they took the pieces to a distant place, covered them with wood and burned them to ashes. Because of Krishna's having sucked the breast of Putana, she was immediately freed of all material contamination. Her sinful reactions automatically vanished. Therefore, when her gigantic body was being burnt, the smoke emanating from the fire was fragrant like aguru incense.

Putana was always hankering for the blood of human children, and with that desire she came to kill Krishna. However, since she offered her breast to the Lord, she attained the greatest achievement. Then, what can be said of those who had natural devotion and affection for Krishna as mothers who offered Him their breasts to suck, or those who offered something very dear as a mother offers something to her child? The Supreme Personality of





Godhead, Krishna, is always situated within the core of the heart of the pure devotee, and He is always offered prayers by such worshipable personalities as Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva. Because Krishna embraced Putana's body with great pleasure and sucked her breast, although she was a witch, she attained the position of a mother in the transcendental world and thus achieved the highest perfection. What then can be said of the cows whose nipples Krishna sucked with great pleasure and who offered their milk very jubilantly and affectionately like a mother? The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, is the bestower of many benedictions, including liberation [*kaivalya*], or oneness with the Brahman effulgence. For that Personality of Godhead, the gopis always felt maternal love, and Krishna sucked their breasts with full satisfaction. Therefore, because of their relationship as mother and son, although the gopis were engaged in various family activities, one should never think that they returned to this material world after leaving their bodies.

Upon smelling the fragrance of the smoke emanating from Putana's burning body, the inhabitants of the distant parts of Vrajabhumi were astonished. "Where is this fragrance coming from?" they asked. Thus they went to the spot where Putana's body was being burnt. When they heard the story of how Putana had come and then been killed by Krishna, they were astonished, and they offered their blessings to the child for His wonderful deed of killing Putana.

Nanda Maharaja felt very much obliged to Vasudeva, who had foreseen this incident. Thinking how great he was, he expressed heartfelt gratitude to Vasudeva. O Maharaja Pariksit, best of the Kurus, Nanda Maharaja was very liberal and simple-hearted. He immediately took his son Krishna on his lap, feeling as if He had returned from death. Affectionately smelling his son's head, Nanda Maharaja enjoyed transcendental bliss.

Any person who hears with faith and devotion about how Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, killed Putana, and who thus becomes absorbed in hearing such childhood pastimes of Krishna, certainly attains attachment for Govinda, the Supreme, original person.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa)* » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 6: The Killing of the Demon Putana » Verses: 1 - 44

UNDERSTANDING THE DELIVERANCE OF PUTANA

Sri Sanatana Goswami

Krishna allowed Putana to enter Gokula respectably, appearing among the cowherds dressed as a first-class lady. At the beginning of Sukadeva Goswami's description of Putana's encounter with Krishna, we are told:

*na yatra śravaṇādīni
rakṣo-ghnāni sva-karmasu
kurvanti sātvatām bhartur
yātudhānyaś ca tatra hi*

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

"My dear king, wherever people in any position perform their occupational duties of devotional service by chanting and hearing [*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*], there cannot be any danger from bad elements. Therefore, there was no need for anxiety about Gokula while the Supreme Personality of Godhead was personally present." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.6.3)

In other words, the witch Putana posed no threat to the inhabitants of Gokula. Krishna allowed her to enter simply to give her His mercy. Krishna placed His lotus feet, the object of Lord Brahma's meditation, on Putana's lap and allowed her to caress Him. By this, Yashoda and Rohini were greatly astonished:

*tām tīkṣṇa-cittām ati-vāma-ceṣṭitām
vīkṣyāntarā koṣa-paricchadāsi-vat
vara-striyam tat-prabhayā ca dharṣite
nirīkṣyamāṇe jananī hy atiṣṭhatām*

"Though she looked like a very affectionate mother, Putana's heart was fierce and cruel. Thus she resembled a sharp sword in a soft sheath. Although they saw her in the room with the child, Yashoda and Rohini did not stop her but remained silent; overwhelmed by her beauty and seeing her apparent motherly affection." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.6.9)

Due to treating Krishna as her own child, Putana became His mother eternally, as several authorities in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* affirm. According to Sukadeva Gosvami:

*pūtānā loka-bāla-ghnī
rākṣasī rudhirāśanā
jighāmsayāpi haraye
stanam dattvāpa sad-gatim*

"Putana was always hankering for the blood of human children, and with that desire she came to kill Krishna; but because she offered her breast to the Lord, she attained the greatest achievement." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.6.35)

As Lord Brahma said to Lord Krishna, *sad-veśād iva pūtānāpi sa-kulā tvām eva devāpitā*: "You have already arranged to give Yourself to Putana and her family members in exchange for her disguising herself as a devotee." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.14.35)

And in the words of Sri Uddhava:

*aho bakīyam stana-kāla-kūṭam
jighāmsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī
lebhe gatim dhātry-ucitām tato 'nyam
kam vā dayāluṁ śaraṇam vrajema*

"Alas, how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than He who granted the position of mother to a she-demon [Putana] although she was unfaithful and she had prepared deadly poison to be sucked from her breast?" (*Bhāgavatam* 3.2.23)

Even Putana's dead body, restored to the horrible form of a witch, was sanctified as Krishna's playground:

*bālam ca tasyā urasi
krīḍantam akuto-bhayam*



*gopyas tūrṇam samabhyetya
jagrhur jāta-sambhramāḥ*

“Without fear, the child Krishna was playing on the upper portion of Putana *rākṣasī*’s breast, and when the gopis saw the child’s wonderful activities, they immediately came forward with great jubilation and picked Him up.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.6.18)

And when her corpse was burned, it gave off a fragrance like precious aguru, which spread in all directions:

*dahyamānasya dehasya
dhūmaś cāguru-saurabhah
utthitah Krishna-nirbhukta-
sapady āhata-pāpmanah*

“Because of Krishna’s having sucked the breast of the *rākṣasī* Putana, she was immediately freed of all material contamination. When Krishna killed her, all her sinful reactions automatically vanished. Therefore when her gigantic body was being burnt, the smoke that emanated was fragrant like aguru incense.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.6.34)

—*Śrī Bhṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* » 1.5.29 » Translation by Gopiparandhan dasa.

DID PUTANA REALLY ATTAIN GOLOKA VRINDAVAN?

Srila Jiva Goswami

*tena dhūrā api yaṇti brahma-vida upakramya svargalokam
ito vimuktāḥ iti śruty-anusāreṇa svarga-śabdenāpy āha
yatudhāny api sā svargam avāpa janani-gatim. iti.*

The transferal of the devotees to the spiritual abode of Lord Krishna is described in the following verses, where the word ‘svarga’ means ‘the planet of Lord Krishna in the spiritual world’:

“The saintly devotees become liberated from the clutches of matter and enter the abode of Lord Krishna.” (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 4.4.8)

“Although Putana was a witch, she attained the position of Krishna’s mother in the transcendental world and thus achieved the highest perfection.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.6.38)

*atra jānani-gatim iti viśeṣeṇa lokāntaram nirastam.
tat-prakaraṇa eva tad-ādīnām bahuśo gaty-antara-
niśedhāt sad-vesā iva Putanapi sakulā tvām eva devā pitā
ity atra sākṣāt tat-prāpti nirdharaṇac ca.*

Because this verse states that Putana attained the post of Lord Krishna’s mother in the *svarga* planet, the *svarga* planet must be Lord Krishna’s planet, Goloka Vrindavan. The word *svarga* here cannot mean the planet of Indra. That Putana became Lord Krishna’s mother in the transcendental world is also confirmed by the following statement of Lord Brahma in (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.14.35):

“O My dear Lord, even Putana, who came to cheat You by dressing herself as a very affectionate mother, was awarded liberation and the actual post of a mother. And other demons belonging to the same family, such as

Aghasura and Bakasura, were also favored with liberation.”

*tathā ca kenopaniṣadi dṛśyate keneśitam manah patati,
prānasya prāṇam uta cakṣusaḥ cakṣur atimucya dhūrāḥ
pretyāsmāl lokād amṛtā bhavanti ity upakramya tad
eva brahma tvaṁ viddhi: iti madhye procya amṛtatvaṁ
hi vindate, satyam āyatanam, yo va etam upaniṣadam
vedāpahatya papmānām anante svarge loka pratiṣṭhati ity
upasamhṛtam.*

The devotees’ attainment of the spiritual world is also described in the following statements of the Katha Upaniṣad, where the word *svarga* is also used to meant the spiritual world (and not the planet of Indra):

Lord Siva asked: “Who is the controller of the mind and the other senses?”

Brahma replied: “The ability to see, the functions of all the senses, and indeed life itself, are all given to the living entities by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The saintly devotees who understand this true position of the Supreme Lord become free from the cycle of birth and death. After leaving this body, they return to the spiritual world, and never again take birth or die.” – (1.1-2)

“Please try to understand the truth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One who understands the Supreme Lord returns to the spiritual world and becomes free from birth and death.” – (1.4, 2.4)

“The transcendental abode of the Supreme Lord is eternal.” – (4.8)

“One who understands the teaching of this Upaniṣad becomes free from all past sinful reactions. He becomes liberated and enters the unlimited spiritual world *svarga*.” – (4.9)

*tataḥ ko vā svargah kim tad brahma. ity apekṣāyām
puruṣo ha vai nārāyaṇaḥ: ity upakramya punaś
cābhyāseṇa nityo deva eko nārāyaṇaḥ ity uktvā
nārāyanopāsakasya ca stutiṁ kṛtvā tad brahma nārāyaṇa
eva iti vyajya svargam pratipādayitum vaikuṇṭhavana-
lokaṁ gamiṣyati, tad idaṁ puram idaṁ puṇḍarikāṁ
viṣṇāna-ghanam tasmāt tad ivā vabhāsam. iti vana-
lokākārasya vaikuṇṭhasyānandātmakatvaṁ pratipādy sa
ca tad-adhiṣṭhātā nārāyaṇaḥ Krishna evety upasamharati
brahmaṇyo devakī-putraḥ iti. śrī-śukah.*

Someone may question our interpretation of the words *svarga* and *brahma* in these passages. In order to allay their doubts, we give the following evidence from Vedic literatures which confirm our understanding that the word *svarga* means ‘the planet of Sri Krishna’ and the word *brahma* means ‘the Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, who is also known as Narayana.’

“Lord Narayana is the Supreme Personality of Godhead”.
-*Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*

“Lord Narayana is the eternal Supreme Lord”. -*Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*

“Lord Narayana is the Supreme Brahman.” -Prayers of

the devotees of Lord Narayana

That the word *svarga* means ‘the abode of Sri Krishna’ is described in the Vedic literatures:

"Saintly devotee will attain the highest Vaikuntha planet, which is a forest in the form of a great lotus flower full of transcendental knowledge."

In this way the blissful nature of Vaikunthaloka's forest (Krishnaloka) is described. The ruler of that forest is Lord Krishna, who is also known as Narayana. This is confirmed in the Atharva Veda:

"The son of Devaki is the Original Personality of Godhead."

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verse quoted in Text 1 was spoken by Srila Sukadeva Goswami.

—From *Śrī-kṛṣṇa-sandarbha* of Srila Jiva Goswami » Anuccheda 108 »
Translation by Srila Bhanu Swami.

WHICH SYMBOL OF ANARTHA IS PUTANA?

Putana symbolises a false spiritual master who teaches material enjoyment and liberation. Pseudo sadhus, who are fond of material enjoyment and liberation, sometimes become gurus and are thus compared to Putana. Out of compassion for His sincere devotees, Krishna kills ‘Putana’ in the form of a false guru and thus protects their newly grown (infant) mood of bhakti.

—Taken from *Sri Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta* 6/6 of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura.

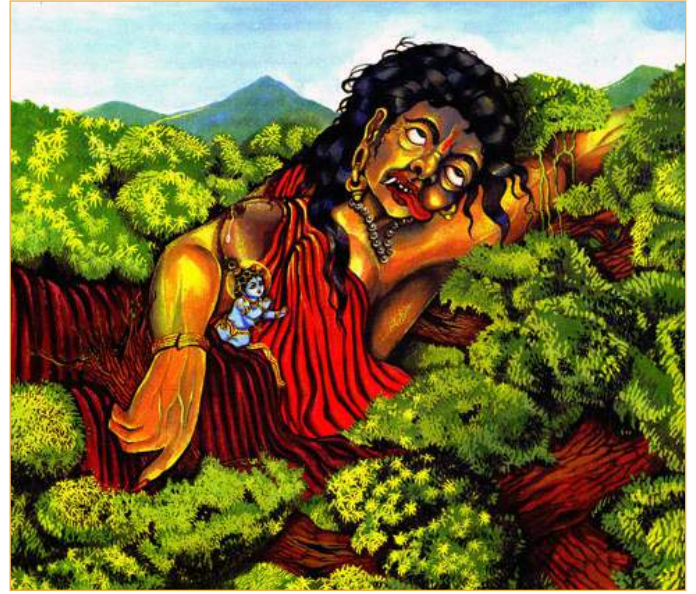
TWO TYPES OF GURUS

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura

There are two types of gurus: *antarāṅgā* or internal, and *bahirāṅgā* or external. The living entity who is situated in *samādhi* is his own internal spiritual master. One who accepts argument as his spiritual master and learns the process of worship in this way, is said to have accepted the shelter of a bogus spiritual master. Thus, argument poses itself as nourishing the living entities’ constitutional duties (*bhakti*). This may be compared to Putana’s falsely posing as a nurse.

Worshippers on the path of attachment (*rāga bhakti*) must completely give up argumentation in spiritual subjects and rather take shelter of genuine *samādhi* from a realized soul. The guru from whom the science of worship is learned is called the external spiritual master. One who properly knows the path of attachment and who instructs his disciples according to their qualification is a *sad-guru*, or eternal spiritual master.

—Taken from *Sri Krishna-saṁhitā* (8/14) of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur



Putana: The slayer of infants

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura

The above *Bhāgavatam* narrative (Deliverance of Putana) embodies a most important moral for those seeking the Absolute, but before offering the textual interpretation favored by the previous *ācāryas*, I would like to draw the reader’s attention to certain possible misconceptions regarding the nature of the interpretation about to be offered. There is a class of persons who insist on the texts being taken in their literal, worldly sense. Interpreters have used much ingenuity to extract meanings that satisfy the empiric judgment of those working by the literal method. Their arguments are not unintelligible. As revealed literature is to be regarded as containing information of the Absolute, the language should be regarded as part and parcel of the meaning of the text. From this conclusion, the literal interpreters jump to the wrong inference that it should be possible for the conditioned soul to ascertain the real meaning of the scriptures by sticking to the lexicographical sense of their actual wordings. This latter part of the argument is inapplicable to the subject, which is transcendental. Rather, the words possess a double meaning. The lexicographic meaning refers to this world’s entities and is therefore inapplicable to the case. The conditioned souls’ gross senses and mind cannot access the esoteric meaning. This is a great and insuperable difficulty. The literal interpreters who follow the lexicographical meaning err grievously when they overlook this all-important consideration.

The transcendental meaning of the words cannot be conveyed to the conditioned soul’s senses as long as the conditioned soul does not agree to listen submissively to the transcendental sound spoken by a pure devotee. There is a definite line of succession of bona fide teachers of the truth. Hypocrites and atheists, who do not want to serve Godhead, cannot recognize bona fide *ācāryas*. Sooner or later, though, a real spiritual seeker will find and recognize a



bona fide teacher. Before finding such a teacher to enlighten him, however, a spiritual candidate should concentrate on self-examination. In this way he will not harbor any lurking traces of insincerity. The *sadhu's* words are also available, by his causeless mercy, to help such candidates discover their own insincerity.

It is by overlooking or deliberately neglecting this preliminary training to understand transcendental meaning that the literal interpreters fail to understand the need to never deviate from the explanations offered by self-realized souls. It is only to such souls that the transcendental meanings are available. Some empiricists, while following the lexicographical and syntactical method of literal interpretation, do not hesitate to read their own meanings into the texts under the impression that the scriptures and the products of the human brain liable to every form of error and, therefore fit to be corrected by the equally erring caprices of other hypothetical thinkers on the ground of allegations of error that cannot be proved, are disposed to think that the *ācāryas'* interpretations are not scrupulously faithful to the text. They then offer allegorical explanations to support their own sectarian views.

I list these possible misunderstandings in order to attract the reader's attention to the importance of the following interpretation of the Putana narrative. It is based on the exposition of previous *ācāryas* and was originally spoken by a bona fide teacher of the Absolute. I do not offer this interpretation as a literal, lexicographical explanation nor as an allegory created to satisfy what people feel they know about the human race's history.

Sri Krishna manifests His eternal birth in the pure cognitive essence of the serving soul, who is located above all mundane limitations. King Kamsa is the typical aggressive empiricist. He is ever on the lookout for the Truth's appearance, because he wishes to suppress the Truth before He has time to grow up. I am not exaggerating the real purpose and understanding of the usual empiricist's position. The materialist has a natural repugnance for the transcendental. He is disposed to think that faith in the incomprehensible is the parent of dogmatism and hypocrisy in the guise of religion. He is also equally under the delusion that there is and can be no real dividing line between matter and spirit. His delusions are strengthened by reading scriptural interpretations presented by those who are of like-minded with himself. This includes all lexicographic interpreters. Kamsa upholds the lexicographical interpretation as the real scientific explanation of scripture and one that is perfectly in keeping with his dread of and aversion for the transcendental. These lexicographical interpreters are employed by Kamsa in suppressing the first suspected appearance of any genuine faith in the transcendental. King Kamsa knows very well that if the faith in the transcendental is once allowed to grow, it is sure to upset all his empiric prospects.

There is historical ground for such misgivings. Accordingly, if the empiric domination is to be preserved intact, it is

necessary to immediately put down the transcendental heresy the moment it threatens to appear. Acting on this traditional fear, King Kamsa is quick to take the scientific precaution of deputing empiric scriptural teachers, backed by dictionary, grammar, and all their empiric subtleties, to put down, by specious arguments based on hypotheses, the true interpretation of eternal religion revealed by the scriptures. Kamsa strongly believes that empiricism can effectively defeat faith in the transcendental if prompt and decisive measures are adopted at the outset. He attributes the past failures of atheism to the neglect of such measures before the theistic fallacy had time to spread among the fanatical masses.

But Kamsa counts without his host. When Krishna is born, He is able to upset all sinister designs against those whom He has apprised of His advent. The apparently causeless faith displayed by persons irrespective of age, gender, or condition may confound all fervent empiricists who are on principle averse to the Absolute Truth. Why are they so averse? Because His appearance is utterly incompatible with the domination of empiricism. But no adverse attempt of the empiricists, whose rule seems till then perfectly well-established over the minds of the world's deluded souls, can dissuade anyone from exclusively following the Truth when the Truth appears to take birth in the pure cognitive essence of his soul.

Putana is the slayer of infants. When a baby emerges from its mother's womb, it at once falls into the clutches of pseudo religious teachers. These teachers are successful in forestalling the good preceptor's attempts, whose help atheists never seek when they baptize their children. This is ensured by the arrangements of all established churches of the world. They have been successful only in supplying watchful Putanas for effecting the spiritual destruction of persons from the moment of their birth with the cooperation of the worldly parents. No human contrivance can prevent these Putanas from obtaining possession of the pulpits. This is because most people in this world are disposed toward atheism. The church with the best chance to survive in this damned world is the atheistic church that functions under the convenient guise of theism. The churches have always proven the staunchest upholders of the grossest forms of worldliness, from which even the worst of non-ecclesiastical criminals are found to recoil. It is not from any deliberate opposition to the ordained clergy that I make these observations.

The original purpose of the world's established churches may not have always been objectionable, but no stable religious arrangement for instructing the masses has yet been successful. The Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya, in pursuance of scriptural teachings, enjoins the absence of conventionalism among teachers of the eternal religion. It does not follow that mechanically adopting an unconventional life will make one a fit religious teacher. Regulation is necessary if one wishes to control the conditioned souls' inherent worldliness, but no mechanical regulation has ever succeeded for such a purpose. The

mere pursuit of fixed doctrines and liturgies cannot hold a person to the true spirit of doctrine or liturgy. The bona fide religious teacher, however, is neither a product nor the proponent of any mechanical system. In his hands, no system can degenerate into a lifeless arrangement.

The idea of an intelligibly organized church indeed marks the close of the living spiritual movement. The great ecclesiastical establishments are the dykes and dams to retain a current that cannot be held by such contrivances. They indeed indicate the masses' desire to exploit a spiritual movement for their own purpose. They also unmistakably indicate the end of the absolute and unconventional guidance of the bona fide spiritual teacher. The people of this world understand preventive systems, but they have no idea at all of the un-prevented positive eternal life. Neither can there be any earthly contrivance for the permanent preservation of the life eternal on this mundane plane on the popular scale.

Those who are disposed, therefore, to look forward to improvement of the worldly state in a mundane sense from the worldly success of any really spiritual movement are greatly mistaken. It is these worldly aspirants who become the patrons of the mischievous race of pseudo religious teachers, the Putanas, whose congenial function is to stifle the theistic disposition at the very moment they suspect its appearance. But the real theistic disposition can never be stifled even by the Putanas' efforts. The Putanas have power only over atheists, and it is for these willing victims that they perform their salutary task.

As soon as the theistic disposition makes its appearance in the pure cognitive essence of the awakened soul, the Putanas are decisively silenced at the earliest stage of their encounter with newborn Krishna. The would-be slayer is herself slain. This is how the negative service the Putanas unwittingly render to theists is rewarded: all their hypocritical demonstrations are strangled. But Putana does not like to receive her reward, because it involves the total destruction of her wrong personality. Neither does King Kamsa like to lose the service of his most trusted agents. The effective silencing of the whole race of pseudo religious teachers is the first clear indication of the appearance of the Absolute on the mundane plane. The bona fide teacher of the Absolute heralds Krishna's advent by his uncompromising campaign against pseudo teachers of religion.

—Taken from the writings of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, published in *Sajjana-toṣaṇī* (The Harmonist), January 1932.

WHY THEN SHOULD ONE GO TO ANY DEMIGOD?

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupada

Bhakti is *nirguṇa*, free from all tinges of material qualities. Although the discharge of devotional service appears to be like material activities, it is never *saguṇa*, or contaminated by material qualities. *Tad-guṇāśrayayā* means that Lord Krishna's transcendental qualities are so sublime that there



is no need to divert one's attention to any other activities. His behavior with the devotees is so exalted that a devotee need not try to divert his attention to any other worship. It is said that the demoniac Putana came to kill Krishna by poisoning Him, but because Krishna was pleased to suck her breast, she was given the same position as His mother. Devotees pray, therefore, that if a demon who wanted to kill Krishna gets such an exalted position, why should they go to anyone other than Krishna for their worshipful attachment? There are two kinds of religious activities: one for material advancement and the other for spiritual advancement. By taking shelter under the lotus feet of Krishna, one is endowed with both kinds of prosperity, material and spiritual. Why then should one go to any demigod?

—*Srīmad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 32. Entanglement in Fruitive Activities » Verse: 22.*



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His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupada

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Gopī-gīta

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GOPI-GĪTA

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KRISHNA'S RE-APPEARANCE IN THE RĀSA ARENA

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

THE GLORIES OF SRIMATI RADHARANI

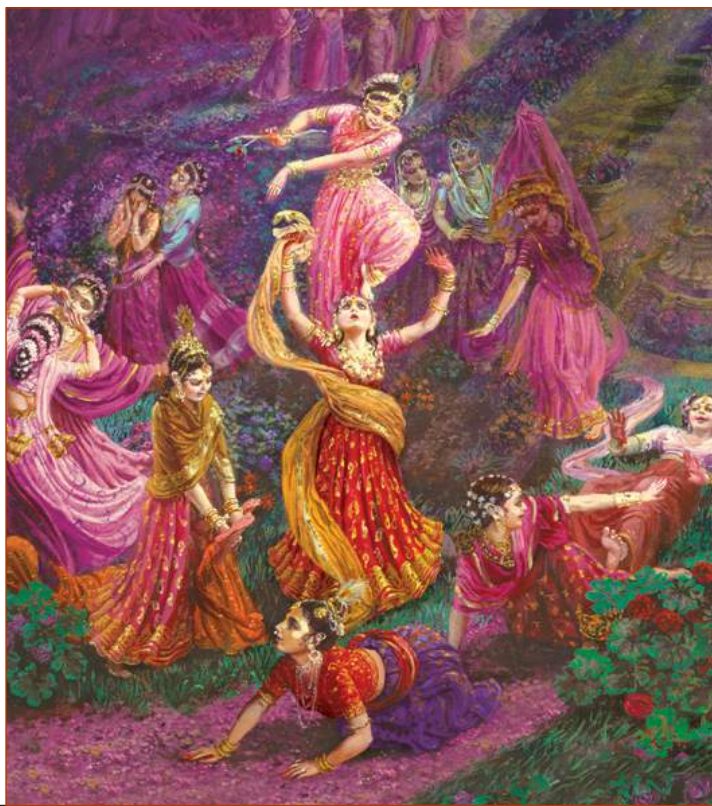
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THE SAKHIS OF VRAJA

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THE PROCESS OF BECOMING ONE OF RADHA'S GIRLFRIENDS

Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura



LORD KRISHNA'S DISAPPEARANCE FROM THE RĀSA DANCE *Editorial*

When Sri Krishna suddenly disappeared from the arena of the *rāsa* dance, the gopis, whose minds were fully absorbed in thoughts of Krishna, began looking for Him in the various forests of Vrindavan. They asked all the moving and nonmoving creatures where Krishna could be found. Finally, they became so distraught that they began imitating His pastimes themselves.

After this, the gopis resumed their search for Krishna. While searching in all places, at last they saw the footprints of Krishna. And, they also noticed footprints of another gopi (Srimati Radharani) beside His! Seeing the two sets of footprints, some gopis became disturbed in their minds, while others declared that surely this gopi must have perfectly worshiped Lord Govinda, to have gotten the good fortune of being alone with Krishna. Further along the path the gopis came to a place where only one set of footprints were visible. Seeing this, they concluded that Krishna must have carried that gopi on His shoulders! In another place, only the toes of Krishna appeared in his footprint. Here the gopis concluded that He must have been reaching up to pick flowers for decorating



nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

that most beloved gopi. In yet another place, the gopis saw signs that led them to imagine that Krishna had been tying the hair locks of that gopi. These thoughts brought pain to the minds of some of the gopis.

Because of the special attention She received from Krishna, that gopi thought Herself to be the most fortunate woman. She told Krishna that She could walk no further and that He would have to carry Her on His shoulders. Hearing these words, Krishna consented and suddenly disappeared. Now alone in a secluded place, that gopi felt extremely anguished. She desperately began looking for Krishna everywhere. Being unsuccessful, She sat down and cried most piteously. When the gopis found Her in that state, all their hearts melted in deep sympathy. They then heard from Her what had happened. All the gopis then went out together to look for Krishna in the forest. They went as far into the forest as the moon-rays could reach. Unsuccessful in finding Krishna, they went back to the banks of the Yamuna river praying for His audience. There they sat and simply sang Krishna's glories in utter helplessness.

The gopis had dedicated their minds and very lives to Krishna, and thus with His disappearance, they were beside themselves with the transcendental pain of separation. Their crying which appears like misery, actually shows their exalted state of transcendental bliss. As it is said in *Caitanya Bhāgavata (Madhyakhanda, 9:240)*

*yata dekha vaiṣṇavera vyavahāra duḥkha
niścaya jāniha sei paramānanda sukha*

‘Whenever one sees a Vaishnava acting unhappy, one should know it for sure that he is actually experiencing the highest spiritual bliss.’

Thus each of the gopis began addressing Lord Sri Krishna according to her individual mode of ecstasy, and they all prayed for Him for His mercy. As the pastimes of Krishna spontaneously arose in the minds of the gopis, they made prayers in the form of a song. These prayers relieve the agony of those suffering from separation from Krishna and bestows supreme auspiciousness.

They sang: "O Lord, O lover, O cheater, when we remember Your smile, Your loving glances and Your pastimes with Your boyhood friends, we become extremely agitated. Remembering Your lotus face, adorned with locks of blackish hair coloured by the dust of the cows' feet, we become irrevocably attached to You. And when we remember how You followed the cows from forest to forest with Your tender feet, we feel great pain."

Previously when the gopis were looking at Krishna, they had felt the blinking of their eyelids intolerable, for it blocked their vision of Him for a fraction of

a second. Now, in their separation from Krishna the gopis considered a single moment an entire age.

There is not even the slightest trace of lust in the hearts of the gopis. The ecstatic sentiments for Lord Krishna that the gopis expressed may appear like symptoms of lust, but in reality they are manifestations of their pure desire to satisfy the Supreme Lord's spiritual senses. This is confirmed in the *Caitanya-caritamrita* (Ādi 4:165), where the gopis' love is discussed:

*ātmendriya-prīti-vāñchā—tāre bali 'kāma'
kṛṣṇendriya-prīti-icchā dhare 'prema' nāma*

'The desire to satisfy one's own senses is called lust, while the desire to satisfy the senses of Kṛṣṇa is called prema, love of God'.



GOPI-GĪTA

Srila Sukadeva Goswami

*gopya ūcuḥ
jayati te 'dhikam janmanā vrajaḥ
śrayata indirā śasvad atra hi
dayita dṛśyatām dikṣu tāvakāś
tvayi dhṛtāsavas tvām vicinvate*

The gopis said: O beloved, Your birth in the land of Vraja has made it exceedingly glorious, and thus Indira, the goddess of fortune, always resides here. It is only for Your sake that we, Your devoted servants, maintain our lives. We have been searching everywhere for You, so please show Yourself to us.

*śarad-udāśaye sādhu-jāta-sat-
sarasijodara- śrī -muṣā dṛśā
surata-nātha te 'śulka-dāsikā
vara-da nighnato neha kiṁ vadhah*

O Lord of love, in beauty Your glance excels the whorl of the finest, most perfectly formed lotus blossoming in an autumn pond. O bestower of benedictions, You are killing us, Your maidservants who have given themselves to You freely. Isn't this murder?

*viṣa-jalāpyayād vyāla-rākṣasād
varṣa-mārutād vaidyutānalāt
vṛṣa-mayātmajād viśvato bhayād
ṛṣabha te vayaṁ rakṣitā muhuḥ*

O greatest of personalities, You have repeatedly saved us from all kinds of danger - from poisoned waters of Yamuna, from the terrible man-eater Agha, from the great rains, from the wind demon, from the fiery thunderbolt of Indra, from the bull demon and from the son of Maya *dānava*.

*na khalu gopikā-nandano bhavān
akhila-dehinām antarātma-dṛk
vikhanasārthito viśva-guptaye
sakha udeyivān sātvatām kule*

O friend, You are not really the son of the gopi Yashoda, but rather the indwelling witness in the hearts of all embodied souls. Lord Brahma prayed for You to come and protect the universe, and You have now appeared in the Satvata dynasty.

*viracitābhayaṁ vṛṣṇi-dhūrya te
caraṇam ūyusām saṁsṛter bhayāt
kara-saroruhām kānta kāma-dam
śirasi dhehi naḥ śrī -kara-graham*

O best of the Vrishnis, Your lotus-like hand, which is held by the Goddess of fortune, grants fearlessness to those who, being afraid of material existence, approach Your feet. O lover, please place that wish-fulfilling lotus hand on our heads.

*vraja-janārti-han vīra yoṣitām
nija-jana-smaya-dhvaṁsana-smita
bhaja sakhe bhavat-kiṅkarīḥ sma no
jalaruhānanam cāru darśaya*

O friend, You destroy the suffering of the people of Vraja, O hero in the eyes of all women, Your smile shatters the false pride of Your devotees, please accept us as Your maidservants and show us Your beautiful lotus face.

*pranata-dehinām pāpa-karṣaṇam
tṛṇa-carānugam śrī -niketanam
phaṇi-phaṇārpitam te padāmbujam
kṛṇu kuceṣu naḥ kṛndhi hṛc-chayam*

Your lotus feet destroy the past sins of all embodied souls who surrender to them. Those feet which follow the cows in the pastures of Vraja, are also the eternal abode of the goddess of fortune. Since You once put Your feet on the hoods of the great serpent Kaliya, now please place them upon our breasts and take away the lust in our hearts.



*madhurayā girā valgu-vākyayā
budha-manojṣayā puṣkarekṣaṇa
vidhi-karīr imā vīra muhyatīr
adhara-sīdhunāpyāyasya naḥ*

O lotus-eyed one, Your sweet voice and charming words, which attract the minds of the intelligent gopis, are bewildering us more and more. Our dear hero, please revive us, Your maidservants with the nectar of Your lips.

*tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam
kavibhir īḍitam kalmaṣāpaham
śravaṇa-maṅgalam śrīmad ātataṁ
bhuvī gṛṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ*

The nectar of Your words and the descriptions of Your activities are the life and soul of those suffering in this material world. These narrations, transmitted by learned sages, eradicate one's sinful reactions and bestow good fortune upon whoever hears them. These narrations are broadcast all over the world and are filled with spiritual power. Certainly those who spread the message of Godhead are most munificent.

*prahasitaṁ priya-prema-vikṣaṇam
viharaṇam ca te dhyāna-maṅgalam
rahasi sanivido yā hr̥di spr̥śaḥ
kuhaka no manaḥ kṣobhayanti hi*

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

Your smiling, Your sweet, loving glances, the intimate pastimes and confidential talks we enjoyed with You - all these are auspicious to meditate upon, and they touch our hearts. At the same time, O deceiver, they also very much agitate our minds.

*calasi yad vrajāc cārayan paśūn
nalina-sundaram nātha te padam
śīla-tṛṇāṅkuraiḥ sīdatīti naḥ
kalīlātām manaḥ kānta gacchati*

O master, O dear lover, when You leave the cowherd village to herd the cows, our minds are disturbed with the thought that Your feet, more beautiful than a lotus, will be pricked by the spiked husks of grain and the rough grass and plants.

*dina-parikṣaye nīla-kuntalair
vanaruhānanam bibhṛad āvṛtam
ghana-rajasvalam darśayan muhur
manasi naḥ smaram vīra yacchasi*

At the end of the day You repeatedly show us Your lotus face, covered with dark blue locks of hair and thickly powdered with dust. Thus, O hero, You arouse lusty desires in our minds.

*praṇata-kāma-dam padmajārcitam
dharāṇi-maṇḍanam dhyeyam āpadi
caraṇa-paṅkajam śantamam ca te
ramaṇa naḥ staneṣv arpayādhi-han*

Your lotus feet, which are worshiped by Lord Brahma, fulfill the desires of all who bow down to them. They are the ornament of the earth, they give the highest satisfaction, and in times of danger they are the appropriate object of meditation. O lover, O destroyer of anxiety, please put those lotus feet upon our breasts.

*surata-vardhanam śoka-nāśanam
svara-veṇunā suṣṭhu cumbitam
itara-rāga-vismāraṇam nṛṇām
vītara vīra nas te 'dharāmṛtam*

O hero, kindly distribute to us the nectar of Your lips, which enhances conjugal pleasure and vanquishes grief. That nectar is thoroughly relished by Your vibrating flute and makes people forget any other attachment.

*aṭati yad bhavān ahni kānanam
truṭi yugāyate tvām apaśyatām*



*kuṭila-kuntalam śrī - mukhaṁ ca te
jaḍa udīkṣatām pakṣma-kṛd dṛśām*

When You go off to the forest during the day, a tiny fraction of a second becomes like a millennium for us because we cannot see You. And even when we can eagerly look upon Your beautiful face, so lovely with its adornment of curly locks, our pleasure is hindered by our eyelids, which were fashioned by the foolish creator.

*pati-sutānvaya-bhrātr-bāndhavān
ativilaṅghya te 'nty acyutāgatāḥ
gati-vidas tavodgīta-mohitāḥ
kitava yoṣitaḥ kas tyajen niśi*

O Acyuta, You know very well why we have come here. Who but a cheater like You would abandon young women who come to see Him in the middle of the night, enchanted by the loud song of His flute? We have completely rejected our husbands, children, ancestors, brothers and other relatives, just to see You.

*rahasi samvidam hṛc-chayodayam
prahasitānanam prema-vīkṣaṇam
brhad-urah śrīyo vīkṣya dhāma te
muhur ati-sprhā muhyate manah*

As we think of the intimate conversations we had with You in secret, as we feel the rise of desire in our hearts and as we remember Your smiling face, Your loving glances and Your broad chest, the resting place of the goddess of fortune, our minds are repeatedly bewildered. Thus we experience severe hankering for You.

*vraja-vanaukasām vyaktir aṅga te
vṛjina-hantry alaṁ viśva-maṅgalam
tyaja manāk ca nas tvat-sprhātmanām
sva-jana-hṛd-rujām yan niśūdanam*

O beloved, whose all-auspicious appearance vanquishes the distress of those living in Vraja's forests, our minds long for Your association. Please give to us but a drop of that medicine, which counteracts the disease in the hearts of Your devotees.

*yat te sujāta-caraṇāmburuhaṁ staneṣu
bhūtāḥ śanaīḥ priya dadhīmahi karkaṣeṣu
tenātavīm aṭasi tad vyathate na kiṁ svit
kūrpādibhir bhramati dhīr bhavad-āyusām naḥ*

O dearly beloved, Your lotus feet are so soft that we place them gently on our breasts, fearing that Your

feet will be hurt. Our life rests only in You. Our minds, therefore, are filled with anxiety that Your tender feet might be wounded by pebbles as You roam about on the forest path.

— From 'Sārārtha-darśinī, Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur's commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » SB 10.31: The Gopīs' Songs of Separation » Verses 1-19
» Translated by Srila Bhanu Swami » Published by Srila Mahanidhi Swami.

KRISHNA'S RE-APPEARANCE IN THE RĀSA ARENA His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

When Lord Krishna finally reappeared among the assembled gopis, He looked very beautiful, just befitting a person with all kinds of opulences. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated, *ānanda-cin-maya-rasa-pratibhāvītābhiḥ*: Krishna alone is not particularly beautiful, but when His energy - especially His pleasure energy, represented by Radharani - expands, He looks very magnificent. The Mayavada conception of perfection—an Absolute Truth without potency—is due to insufficient knowledge. Actually, outside the exhibition of His different potencies, the Absolute Truth is not complete. *Ānanda-cin-maya-rasa* means that His body is a transcendental form of eternal bliss and knowledge. Krishna is always surrounded by different potencies, and therefore He is perfect and beautiful. We understand from the *Brahma-saṁhitā* and *Skanda Purāṇa* that Krishna is always surrounded by many thousands of goddesses of fortune. The gopis are all goddesses of fortune, and Krishna took them hand in hand on the bank of the Yamuna.

It is said in the *Skanda Purāṇa* that out of many thousands of gopis, 16,000 are prominent, out of those



16,000, 108 are especially prominent, out of these 108 gopis, eight gopis are still more prominent, out of those eight gopis, Radharani and Candravali are even more prominent, and out of these two gopis, Radharani is the most prominent.

— Taken from *KṚṢṢṆA, The Supreme Personality of Godhead* » Chapter 32 : *Kṛṣṇa Returns to the Gopīs*.

THE GLORIES OF SRIMATI RADHARANI
Srila Krishnadas Kaviraja Goswami

*mahābhāva-svarūpā śrī-rādhā-ṭhākurāṇī
sarva-guṇa-khaṇī kṛṣṇa-kāntā-śiromaṇī*

Sri Radha Thakurani is the embodiment of *mahābhāva*. She is the repository of all good qualities and the crest jewel among all the lovely consorts of Lord Krishna.

Of these two gopis (Radharani and Candravali), Srimati Radharani is superior in all respects. She is the embodiment of *mahābhāva*, and She surpasses all in good qualities. Her mind, senses and body are steeped in love for Krishna. She is Krishna's own energy, and She helps Him in His pastimes.

*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhāvitābhis
tābhir ya eva nija-rūpatayā kalābhiḥ*



nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

*goloka eva nivasaty akhilātma-bhūto
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

"I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who resides in His own realm, Goloka, with Radha, who resembles His own spiritual figure and who embodies the extensions of Her bodily form and who are imbued and permeated with ever- ecstatic potency (*hlādinī*). Their companions are Her confidantes, who embody - blissful spiritual *rasa*."

The beloved consorts of Lord Krishna are of three kinds: the goddesses of fortune, the queens, and the milkmaids of Vraja, who are the foremost of all. These consorts all proceed from Radhika.

Just as the fountainhead, Lord Krishna, is the cause of all incarnations, so Sri Radha is the cause of all these consorts. The goddesses of fortune are partial manifestations of Srimati Radhika, and the queens are reflections of Her image. The goddesses of fortune are Her plenary portions, and they display the forms of *vaibhava-vilāsa*. The queens are of the nature of Her *vaibhava-prakāśa*. The *Vraja-devīs* have diverse bodily features. They are Her expansions and are the instruments for expanding *rasa*. Without many consorts, there is not such exultation in *rasa*. Therefore, there are many manifestations of Srimati Radharani to assist in the Lord's pastimes.

Among them are various groups of consorts in Vraja who have varieties of sentiments and mellow. They help Lord Krishna taste all the sweetness of the *rāsa* dance and other pastimes.

govindānandinī rādhā, govinda-mohinī
govinda-sarvasva, sarva-kāntā-śiromaṇi

Radha is the one who gives pleasure to Govinda, and She is also the enchantress of Govinda. She is the be-all and end-all of Govinda, and the crest jewel of all His consorts.

*devī kṛṣṇa-mayī proktā
rādhikā para-devatā
sarva-lakṣmī-mayī sarva-
kāntih sammohinī parā*

The transcendental goddess Srimati Radharani is the direct counterpart of Lord Sri Krishna. She is the central figure for all the goddesses of fortune. She possesses all the attractiveness to attract the all-attractive Personality of Godhead. She is the primeval internal potency of the Lord."

*‘devī’ kahi dyotamānā, paramā sundarī
kimvā, Krishna-pūjā-krīdāra vasati nagarī*



‘Devī’ means resplendent and most beautiful. Or else it means the lovely abode of the worship and love sports of Lord Krishna.

*kṛṣṇa-mayī - kṛṣṇa yāra bhitare bāhire
yānhā yānhā netra paḍe tānhā kṛṣṇa sphure*

kṛṣṇa-mayī means one whose within and without are Lord Krishna. She sees Lord Krishna wherever She casts Her glance.

kṛṣṇa-mayī means that She is identical with Lord Krishna, for She embodies the mellows of love. The energy of Lord Krishna is identical with Him. Her worship (*ārādhana*) consists of fulfilling the desires of Lord Krishna. Therefore, the *Purāṇas* call Her Radhika.

“Truly the Personality of Godhead has been worshiped by Her. Therefore, Lord Govinda, being pleased, has brought Her to a lonely spot, leaving us all behind.”

Therefore, Radha is *parama-devatā*, the supreme goddess, and She is worshipable for everyone. She is the protectress of all, and She is the mother of the entire universe.

Radha is the original source of all the goddesses of fortune. She fully represents the six opulences of Krishna. Therefore, She is the supreme energy of Lord Krishna.

*sarva-saundarya-kānti vaisaye yānhāte
sarva-lakṣmī-gaṇera śobhā haya yānhā haite*

The word ‘*sarva-kānti*’ indicates that all beauty and luster rest in Her body. All the laksmis derive their beauty from Her.

Kānti may also mean all the desires of Lord Krishna. All the desires of Lord Krishna rest in Srimati Radharani. Srimati Radhika fulfills all the desires of Lord Krishna. This is the meaning of *sarva-kānti*. Lord Krishna enchants the world, but Sri Radha enchants even Him. Therefore, She is the supreme goddess of all.

Sri Radha is the full power, and Lord Krishna is the possessor of full power. The two are not different, as evidenced by the revealed scriptures. They are indeed the same, just as musk and its scent are inseparable, or as fire and its heat are non-different.

Thus Radha and Lord Krishna are one, yet They have taken two forms to enjoy the mellows of pastimes. To promulgate *prema-bhakti* (devotional service in love of Godhead), Krishna appeared as Sri Krishna Caitanya with the mood and complexion of Sri Radha.

—*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* » *Ādi-līlā* » *Ādi 4: The Confidential Reasons for the Appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu* » Verses 69-100.

THE SAKHĪS OF VRAJA Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakur

Vrajanatha: Babaji, who are the *nitya-siddhas*, and who are the *sādhana-siddhas*?

Raghunatha dasa Babaji: The complete embodiment of Sri Krishna’s *svarūpa-śakti* is Srimati Radharani. Her immediate personal expansions are the *aṣṭa-sakhīs*, the eight principal gopis. They further expand as the *nitya-siddha* gopis, who are *kāya-vyūha*, bodily expansions, of Srimati Radharani. They are all *nitya-siddha*, eternally perfect, and not in the category of *jīva-śakti*; they are an exclusive class of their own, being the expansions of the *svarūpa-śakti* of Krishna, Srimati Radharani.

The *sakhīs* of Vraja in general attained perfection through *rāgānuga sādhanā-bhakti*. Later they associated with the *nitya-siddha* expansions of Srimati Radhika. In this way, they are examples of *sādhana-siddha jīvas*. By the mercy of Srimati Radhika, they were imbued with the *hlādinī-śakti* and thus were able to live on the same planet as Krishna (*sālokya*) and serve the Divine Couple with the *nitya-siddha vraja-gopis*.

When they attain perfection, the devotees engaged in *rāgānuga-bhakti sādhanā* in *mādhurya-rasa*, become *sakhīs*, i.e. gopi friends of Srimati Radhika. Other *sādhakas* practice *vaidhī-bhakti* with deference to *śāstric* import to please Krishna in *mādhurya-rasa*. Later when leaving their bodies, these practitioners of *vaidhī-bhakti* may serve Krishna in Dwaraka as His married queens. The practice of taking shelter of the Goddess of Vraja, Srimati Radharani, and Her *vraja-gopis* is beyond the scope of *vaidhī-bhakti*, the path of regulative devotion. Only those who nurture *rāgānuga-bhakti* internally and practice the *vaidhī-bhakti* disciplines externally will obtain the perfection of service to the Divine Couple in Vraja.

—From *Jaiva Dharma of Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura* » Chapter Twenty-one »
Nitya-dharma: Sambandha, Abhidheya and Prayojana.

THE PROCESS OF BECOMING ONE OF RADHA’S GIRLFRIENDS Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura

*pañca-sakhī madhye cāra, nitya-siddha rādhikāra
se sakale sādhanā nā koilo
sakhī boli' ukta jei, sādhanā-prabhābe tei
vraja-rāja pure bāsa pāilo*

Amongst the five groups of Radharani’s *sakhīs*, four are eternally situated in their perfect roles (*nitya-siddha*). They did not have to perform any ritualistic *sādhana* to achieve their position. The fifth group is the gopis who have newly attained residence in Vraja by dint of their



sādhana.

*sei sakhī dvi-prakāra, sādhanete siddha āra
sādhana-para bolīyā gaṇana
siddha boli' ākhyā tāñra, gopī-deha hoilo jāñra
kori' rāge jugala-bhajana*

These new *sakhīs* are of two varieties - those who are still performing *sādhana* in their present bodies as *sadhaka manjaris* and those who are already situated in their spiritual bodies beyond the rules of *sādhana*. Those who attain perfection and receive the body of a *gopī* are called *siddha*, and they continuously worship the Divine Couple in spontaneous love (*raga*).

*kṛṣṇākṛṣṭa muni-jana, tathā upaniṣad-gaṇa
je nā loilo gopīra svarūpa
sādhana ābeṣe bhaje, siddhi tabu nā upaje
vraja-bhāva-prāpti aparūpa*

There are many great saints who are attracted by Lord Krishna, but who haven't achieved the topmost perfection of receiving the form of a *gopī*. The personified *Upaniṣads* are also in this category. Although they are all absorbed in their regulative worship of the Lord, their eternal spiritual *siddhi* still hasn't fully awakened; for the mood of Vraja is very wonderful and rarely attained.

*je je śruti-muni-gaṇa, gopī haya su-bhajana
korilo sakhīra pada dhari'*

*nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā
nitya-sakhī-kṛpā-bale, tat-sālokya-lābha-phale
sevā kore śrī-rādhā-śrī-hari*

There were some great *munis* and personified *śrutis* who worshipped in the mood of the *gopis*, following in the footsteps of one of Radharani's girlfriends. Then, by the power of that *nitya-sakhī's* affectionate favor, they ultimately attained a residential place in that *sakhī's* abode, where they eternally serve the Divine Couple Sri Radha and Sri Hari.

*devī-gaṇa sei bhāve, sakhīra sālokya-lābhe
kṛṣṇa-sevā kore sakhī ho'ye
vrajera vidhāna ei, gopī binā āra keho
nā pāibe vraja-juva--dvaye*

Similarly, many groups of goddesses (*devīs*) have also become Radha's *sakhīs* by this process. They are now absorbed in *kṛṣṇa-sevā*. This is how a sincere soul becomes one of Radharani's eternal girlfriends – accepting the mood of a *sakhī*, one must render eternal service for the pleasure of Krishna in the abode of another *sakhī*. There is only one real principle which governs entrance into Vraja, that is, one must achieve the mercy of one of Srimati Radharani's *sakhīs*. It is absolutely impossible for anyone to attain ecstatic eternal service of the young couple of Vraja in any other way.

—From *Śrī Śrī Gītā-mālā* » Part 4 » *Rupanuga-bhajana-darpana* » Song 18 »

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Śrī Parśvā Ekādaśī

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INTRODUCED BY INDRA**

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**IRRELIGIOUS ASPECTS INTRODUCED BY INDRA***Sri Maitreya R̥ṣi*

King Prithu initiated the performance of one hundred horse sacrifices at a place known as Brahnavarta, where the River Sarasvati flows towards the east. This piece of land was controlled by Svayambhuva Manu. When the most powerful Indra, the King of heaven, saw this, he considered the likelihood that King Prithu would exceed him in fruitive activities and take his position as King of heaven. Thus Indra could not bear to see the great sacrificial ceremonies performed by King Prithu.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Vishnu is present in everyone's heart as the Supersoul. He is the proprietor of all planets and the enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices. Therefore He personally attended the sacrifices made by King Prithu. When Lord Vishnu appeared in the sacrificial arena, Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva and all the chief predominating personalities of every planet, as well as their followers, came with Him. Seeing Him, the residents of Gandharvaloka and Apsaroloka and all the great sages, praised Him. The Lord was also accompanied by the residents of Siddhaloka and Vidyadhara-loka, the descendants of Diti, and the demons and Yakshas. He was also accompanied by His chief associates, headed by Sunanda and Nanda. Great devotees, who were always engaged in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as well as the great sages named Kapila, Narada and Dattatreya, and masters of mystic powers, headed by Sanaka Kumara, all attended the great sacrifice with Lord all attended the great sacrifice with Lord Vishnu.

In that great sacrifice the entire land came to be like the milk-producing *kāma-dhenu*, and thus, by the performance of *yajña*, all daily necessities for life were supplied. The rivers supplied all kinds of tastes—sweet, pungent, sour, etc.—and very big trees supplied fruit and honey in abundance. The cows, having eaten sufficient green grass, supplied profuse quantities of milk, curd, clarified butter and similar other necessities. King Prithu was presented with various gifts by the general populace and predominating deities of all planets. The oceans and seas were full of valuable jewels and pearls, and the hills were full of minerals and natural fertilizers. The four kinds of edibles grew profusely.

King Prithu was dependent on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known as *adhokṣaja*. King Prithu performed many sacrifices, and because of that, the Supreme Lord, His mercy empowered him to become like a super-human.

King Prithu's opulence, however, could not be tolerated by the King of heaven, Indra, who naturally tried to impede his progress. When Prithu Maharaja

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

was performing the last horse sacrifice [*aśvamedha-yajña*], King Indra, invisibly, stole the sacrificial horse. He did this because he was greatly jealous of King Prithu. When taking away the horse, King Indra dressed himself to appear as a holy person (*sādhu*). Actually this dress was a form of cheating, for it falsely created an impression of religion. When Indra escaped in this way, the great sage Atri saw him and understood everything of the whole situation. The son of King Prithu, being apprised by Atri of King Indra's trick, was immediately spurred into action, and followed Indra to kill him, calling, Wait! Wait!; King Indra was fraudulently dressed as a *sannyāsī*, having knotted hair on his head and ashes smeared all over his body. Upon seeing such dress, the son of King Prithu thought Indra a holy renunciant (*sannyāsī*.) Therefore he did not shoot him with his arrows. When Atri Muni saw that the son of King Prithu did not kill Indra but returned deceived by him, the muni again instructed him to kill the corrupt heavenly King. He thought that Indra had become the lowliest of all demigods due to his impeding the execution of King Prithu's sacrifice.

Being thus informed, the grandson of King Vena immediately began to pursue the rapidly fleeing Indra. Greatly angry he pursued King Indra just as the king of the vultures chased Ravana. When Indra saw that the vigilant son of Prithu was chasing him, he immediately abandoned his false dress and let go of the horse. Indeed, he disappeared from that very spot, and the great hero, the son of Maharaja Prithu, returned the horse to his father's sacrificial arena.

When the great sages observed the wonderful prowess of the son of King Prithu, they all agreed to give him the name *Vijitāśva*. Later Indra, being the powerful King of heaven brought a dense darkness upon the sacrificial arena. Clouding everything in this way, he again abducted the sacrificial horse, which had been chained with golden shackles near the wooden sacrificial guillotine. The great sage Atri again pointed out to the son of King Prithu that Indra was fleeing through the sky. That hero, the son of Prithu, again chased him. However he saw that Indra was holding a staff with a skull at the top and was wearing the dress of a *sannyāsī*, and again chose not to punish him. When the great sage Atri re-apprised him, *Vijitāśva*, became very angry and placed an arrow on his bow. Upon seeing this, King Indra immediately abandoned the false dress of a *sannyāsī* and, giving up the horse, made himself invisible. Then the great hero, *Vijitāśva*, the son of King Prithu, again took the horse and returned to his father's sacrificial arena.

Since that time, certain men of lesser knowledge have adopted the dress of a false *sannyāsī*. It was King Indra who introduced this. Whatever different forms Indra assumed as a mendicant because of his desire to seize the horse were symbols of atheistic philosophy.



Indra Steals the Horse, Artist: Dinabandhu Dasa

In this way, King Indra, in order to steal the horse from King Prithu's sacrifice, adopted several orders of *sannyāsa*. Some *sannyāsīs* go naked, and sometimes they wear red garments and pass under the name of *kāpālīka*. These are simply symbolic representations of their sinful activities. These so-called *sannyāsīs* are very much appreciated by sinful men because they are all godless atheists and very expert in putting forward arguments and reasons to support their case. We must know, however, that they are only passing as adherents of religion and are not so in fact. Unfortunately, bewildered persons accept them as religious, and being attracted to them, they spoil their life. Maharaja Prithu, who was celebrated as very powerful, immediately took up his bow and arrows and prepared to kill Indra himself, because Indra had introduced such irregular *sannyāsa* orders. When the priests and all the others saw Maharaja Prithu very angry and prepared to kill Indra, they requested him: "O great soul, do not kill him, for only sacrificial animals can be killed in a sacrifice. Such are the directions given by *śāstra*. Dear King, Indra's powers are already reduced due to his attempt to impede the execution of your sacrifice. We shall call him by Vedic mantras which were never before used, and certainly he will come. Thus by the power of our mantra, we shall cast him into the fire because he is your enemy."

After giving the King this advice, the sacrificial

priests, in a fire mood, began to summon Indra, the King of heaven, by mystic mantras. When they were just about to initiate that fierce sacrifice, Lord Brahma appeared there and forbade them to continue.

Lord Brahma addressed them thus: My dear sacrificial performers, you cannot kill Indra, the King of heaven. That is not expected of persons such as yourselves. You should know that Indra is as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Indeed, he is one of the most powerful assistants of the Personality of Godhead. You are trying to satisfy all the demigods by the performance of this *yajña*, but you should know that all these demigods are but parts and parcels of Indra, the King of heaven. How, then, can you kill him in this great sacrifice? In order to make trouble and impede the performance of King Prithu's great sacrifice, King Indra has adopted some means that in the future will destroy the clear path of religious life. I draw your attention to this fact. If you oppose him any further, he will further misuse his power and introduce many other irreligious systems. Let there be only ninety-nine sacrificial performances for Maharaja Prithu, Lord Brahma concluded.

Lord Brahma then turned towards Maharaja Prithu and informed him that since he was thoroughly aware of the path of liberation, what was the use in performing more sacrifices? Let there be good fortune to both of you, for you and King Indra are both part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore you should not be angry with King Indra, who is non-different from you. My dear King, do not be agitated and anxious because your sacrifices have not been properly executed due to providential impediments. Kindly take my words with great respect. We should always remember that if something happens by providential arrangement, we should not be very sorry. The more we try to rectify such reversals, the more we enter into the darkest region of materialistic thought.

Stop the performance of these sacrifices, for they have induced Indra to introduce so many irreligious aspects. You should know very well that even the demigods have many unwanted desires. Just see how Indra, the King of heaven, was creating a disturbance in the sacrifice by stealing the sacrificial horse. These sinful activities he has introduced will attract the minds of the people in general, who will imitate them. O King Prithu, son of Vena, you are the part-and- parcel, expansion of Lord Vishnu. Due to the mischievous activities of King Vena, religious principles were almost lost. At that opportune moment you descended as the incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Indeed, for the protection of religious principles you have appeared from the body of King Vena. O protector of the people in general, please consider the purpose of your being incarnated by Lord Vishnu. The irreligious principles created by Indra are but mothers of so many unwanted religions. Please

therefore stop these imitations immediately. When King Prithu was thus advised by the supreme teacher, Lord Brahma, he abandoned his eagerness to perform *yajñas* and with great affection made peace with King Indra. After this, Prithu Maharaja took his bath, which is customarily taken after the performance of a *yajña*, and received the benedictions and due blessings of the demigods, who were very pleased by his glorious activities. With great respect, the original king, Prithu, offered all kinds of rewards to the *brāhmaṇas* present at the sacrifice. Since all these *brāhmaṇas* were very much satisfied, they gave their heartfelt blessings to the King.

All the great sages and *brāhmaṇas* said: O mighty King, by your invitation all classes of living entities have attended this assembly. They have come from Pitraloka and the heavenly planets, and great sages as well as common men have attended this meeting. Now all of them are very much satisfied by your dealings and your charity towards them.

—*Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter 19. King Prithu's One Hundred Horse Sacrifices » Verse: 1 to 42.*

CHEATING SANNYĀSIS AND YOGĪS

His Divine Grace

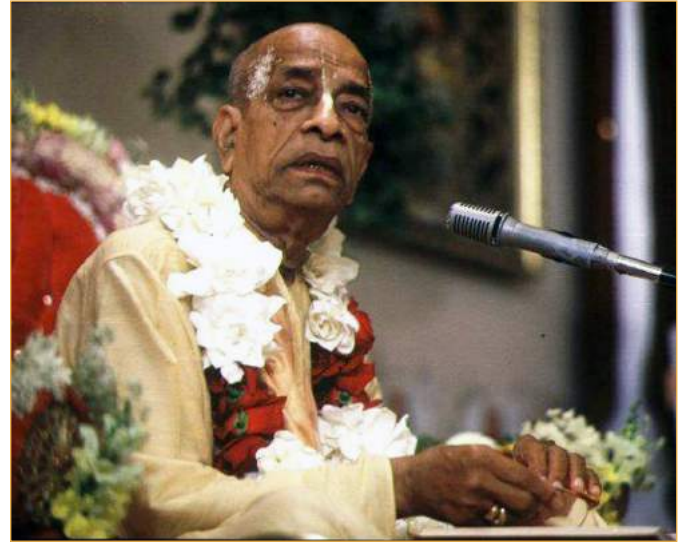
A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Indra took up the saffron-colored dress as a way of cheating others. This saffron dress has been misused by many imposters who present themselves as spiritually elevated persons or incarnations of God. In this way people are cheated. As we have mentioned many times, the conditioned soul has a tendency to cheat; therefore this quality is also visible in a person like King Indra. It is understood that even King Indra is not free from the clutches of material contamination. The saffron dress worn by a *sannyāsī* announces to the world that he has renounced all worldly affairs and is simply engaged in the spiritual cultivation. A devotee is actually a *sannyāsī*, or liberated person. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.1) it is said:

*anāśritaḥ karma-phalam
kāryam karma karoti yaḥ
sa sannyāsī ca yogī ca
na niragnir na cākriyaḥ*

One who is unattached to the fruits of his work and who works as he is obligated is in the renounced order of life, and he is the true mystic, not he who lights no fire and performs no work.

In other words, one who offers the results of his activities to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is actually a *sannyāsī* and *yogī*. Cheating *sannyāsīs* and



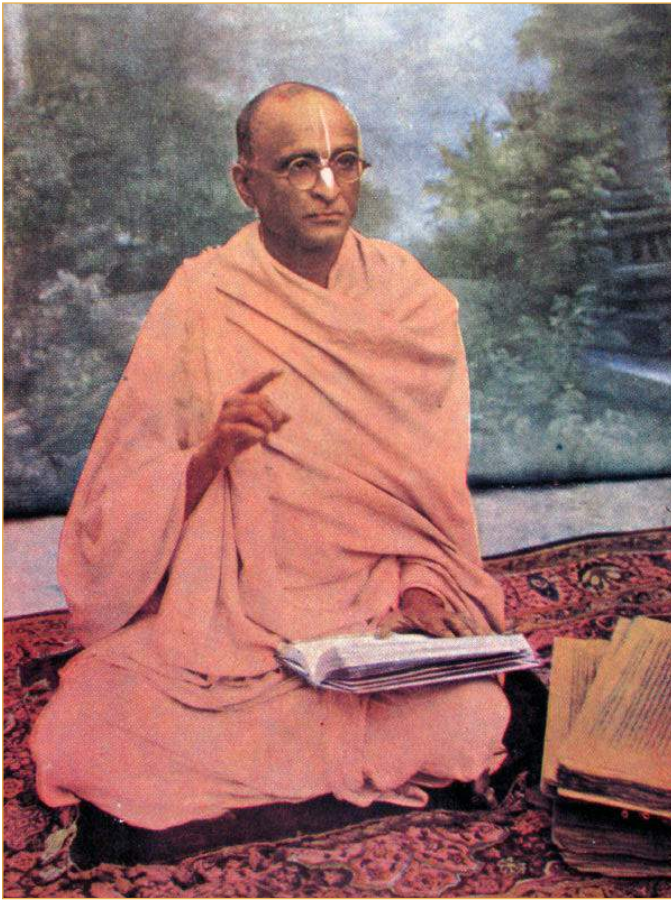
yogīs have existed since the time of Prithu Maharaja's sacrifice. This cheating was very foolishly introduced by King Indra. In some ages such cheating is very prominent, and in other ages not so prominent. It is the duty of a *sannyāsī* to be very cautious because, as stated by Lord Chaitanya, *sannyāsīra alpa chidra sarva-loke gāya*, a little spot in a *sannyāsī's* character will be magnified by the public (Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 12.51). Therefore, unless one is very sincere and serious, he should not take up the order of *sannyāsa*. One should not use this order as a means to cheat the public. It is better not to take up *sannyāsa* in this age of Kali because provocations are very strong in this age. Only a very exalted person advanced in spiritual understanding should attempt to take up *sannyāsa*. One should not adopt this order as a means of livelihood or for some material purpose.

—*Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter 19. King Prithu's One Hundred Horse Sacrifices » Verse: 12.*

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WEAKNESS AND CHEATING?

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura

Cheating and weakness are two separate things. Persons devoid of a cheating propensity achieve perfection in life, but a cheater is never successful. Vaishnavism is another name for simplicity. Cheaters are non-devotees. Sincere persons can be weak, but they are not cheaters. Cheaters say something and do something else. Weak people are embarrassed by their defects, whereas cheaters are maddened by their achievements. They think, "I will cheat the *ācārya*," "I will deceive the doctor," "I will nourish the poisonous snake of my sinful propensity with banana and milk, hiding him in the hole of my cheating propensity," and, "I will demand name and fame from the people while posing as a saint" These are not symptoms of



weakness but of utter deceitfulness. Such cheaters will never achieve any good.

By hearing humbly from saints with a sincere attitude, however, one will gradually attain auspiciousness. After accepting *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa*, if one remains busy with worldly activities, thinking that family life is more important than spiritual life or maintaining the sinful mentality of kidnapping Sita from Rama as Ravana did even while dressed as a devotee, then one is a self-killer.

We are far from the worship of Hari. Even if we have weakness and have enough *anarthas* to last us for millions of years, we are not as plagued by misfortune as if we possessed a cheating propensity. It is better to take birth as animals or birds than to take shelter of cheating.

— *Amṛta Vāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thakura Prabhupāda Compiled by Śrīpāda Bhakti Mayukha Bhāgavat Mahārāja, Adapted and Published by Īśvara dāsa, Translated from Bengali by Bhūmipati dāsa.*

PSEUDO RELIGION Srila Bhaktinod Thakur

Which religions are called irreligion, cheating religion, reflection of religion, or non-religion?

Religion in which various *anarthas* such as atheism,

skepticism, materialism, and impersonalism are present, are not accepted as religion by the Vaishnavas. In fact, such religions are to be accepted as irreligion, cheating religion, reflection of religion, or non-religion.

— *Caitanya-sikṣāmṛta 1/1*

Who are sinful and cheating on the pretext of being an ācārya?

Pseudo ascetics and hypocrites give others mantras and pretend to be ācāryas, but they engage in various sinful activities. Detached and renounced Vaishnavas must develop extremely pure characteristics.

— *Sajjana-toṣaṇī 5/10*

What is the harm if persons who follow pseudo religion identify themselves as *brahmacārīs*, *sannyāsīs*, and *paramahāṁsas*?

Nowadays, being involved in various pseudo religions, many people identify themselves as *brahmacārīs*, *sannyāsīs*, and *paramahāṁsas*, and thus they destroy the religious principles of the *āryans*.

— *Sajjana-toṣaṇī 10/7*

Who are ass-like people and cheaters? Why are they unfavorable to devotional service?

Those who do not understand their qualification but accept the instruction of a bogus guru and engage in the process of worship meant for exalted devotees are cheated ass-like people. And those who have understood their ineligibility yet with a goal to accumulate money and prestige still follow the process of worship meant for exalted devotees are called cheaters. Until this cheating in the name of religion is destroyed, one's attachment will not awaken. Such people deceive the entire world by making a show of sectarian formalities and pseudo-renunciation."

— *Krishna Saṁhitā Chapter-8/16*

Who are unsteady renunciates ?

"Those who take *sannyāsa* by being induced by temporary detachment born from quarrel, distress, lack of wealth, disease and accident, in the process of getting married, are unsteady renunciates. Their detachment does not last long; very soon they become pseudo renunciates."

— *Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta 5/2*

What is the only religion which is free from all cheating propensities?



“There is only one religion in this world, that is Vaishnava dharma. All other systems of religion are full of differences in opinion, arguments, counter arguments, envy and eagerness to prove their supremacy over others. Those religious systems which did not specify the relationship between *Karma*, *Jñāna*, *Bhakti* and *Vairāgya*, are all cheating religion. Only Vaishnava dharma is pure and without cheating. The pure Vaishnava dharma cannot be polluted by the characteristics and conclusions of pseudo Vaishnavas.”

—Sajjana Toṣaṇī - 11/10

Which association of so-called Vaishnavas should be given up?

The association of the following pseudo Vaishnavas must be given up;

1. Those who put on the garbs of a Vaishnava out of cunningness.
2. Those who identify themselves as the followers of the Vaishnava *ācāryas* just to make impression among the impersonalists.
3. Those who identify themselves as Vaishnavas because of greed for money, fame or any other enjoyment.”

—Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta 3/2

Why do many people call pseudo-Vaishnavism pure Vaishnavism?

Due to the influence of Kali many people, not understanding the principle of pure Vaishnavism, call pseudo-Vaishnavism pure Vaishnavism.

—Jaiva Dharma, Chapter 4

What are the characteristics of the cheaters? Do the devotees expose them in public for the benefit of themselves and others?

“Those who are averse to the association and conversation of the Vaishnavas are simply disguised as devotees. Their devotional service to Vishnu is certainly an external ornament as internally their hearts are polluted. Absence of desire for associating with the devotees is their symptom. One may test the disguised devotees by observing these symptoms. People think that they should serve such Vaishnavas, but that is a mistake. There are many genuine Vaishnavas and one should try to associate with and serve them. It is not that those who are intelligent, sincere and pure devotees remain indifferent to the pseudo affection of such so-called devotees. Rather they establish pure devotional service in this world by exposing the deceitful to the world. It is the duty of everyone to associate with such pure devotees who are expert in destroying deceitfulness



and begin to relish the love of God. This is a well known fact.”

—Commentary on Bhajanāmṛtam

By accepting any philosophy as Mahaprabhu's philosophy can one obtain the teachings of the Lord?

Many times, because of bad karma, miscreants of various unauthorized cults, such as pseudo religion and irreligion, say that they preach the teachings of Sri Chaitanyadeva. Being absorbed in material enjoyment and not having the ability to discriminate, many people accept those unauthorized cults as the line of Mahaprabhu, and thus they are cheated from receiving the actual instructions of the Lord.

—Caitanya-Śikṣāmṛta

Can the foodstuffs cooked by the non-devotees or pseudo devotees be offered to Krishna?

“Food stuffs that are cooked only by pure devotees should be offered to Krishna. During the time Krishna is worshiped no non-devotee should be present to witness that puja.”

—Harināma Cintāmanī



Can one achieve the result of Vaishnava Seva by feeding the pseudo Vaishnavas who are greedy after opulent food, wealth, and disciples?

**PSEUDO BRĀHMAṆA AND
HARIDAS THAKURA**

Srila Vrindavan Das Thakura

“The present custom in the holy places is extremely harmful. There one person goes out and invites one hundred Vaishnavas for lunch. After receiving such invitation the Vaishnavas immediately give up their respective duties and decorate themselves with tilaka etc. They then began to manifest symptoms of devotional service thinking, “Today we will get sufficient puris and malpoyas as well as some dakṣina (donations).” In his book, *Śrī Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* Sri Rupa Goswami has not accepted these activities as devotional service. Therefore if these activities are not devotional service then the performers of such activities also can not be accepted as Vaishnavas.”

—*Sajjana Toṣaṇī* 6/1

What is the definition of pseudo love of God?

“Pseudo Love of God is like the play of a drama, and it results only in sense gratification. Therefore, O mind, always give up sensual pleasures, which are full of offenses.”

—*Kalyāṇa Kalpataru*, Song 19

What is Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura’s instruction towards the pseudo renunciates and those who desire material fame?

“You are a servant of Sri Chaitanya and you should desire devotional service to Hari. What is the use of various symptoms of *āśrama* life? Please reject material honor and reside in Shantipura. Your only assets are the mercy of the devotees.”

—*Kalyāṇa Kalpataru*, Song 13

How do spiritual knowledge, renunciation and devotional service help a spirit soul?

“Knowledge regarding ones relationship with the Supreme Lord and detachment from material objects automatically develop in a person who engages in devotional service. Wherever they are not developed, it is to be understood that there is an absence of devotional service. Therefore, it should be called pseudo devotional service. Through renunciation, a spirit soul attains satisfaction. Through knowledge regarding ones relationship with the Supreme Lord, a spirit soul attains nourishment, and through devotional service, a spirit soul attains mitigation of his hunger.”

—*Śrī Bhāgavatārka Marichi Māla* 15/117

—*Taken from Bhaktivinoda Vāṇī Vaibhāva Published by Īṣvara dāsa.*

One day in the courtyard of a rich man’s house this snake charmer was performing a snake dance. He was chanting a special mantra accompanied by musicians playing the *mrdaṅga* and *mandira*. Haridasa was passing by and stood to one side watching the snake dance. Although the snake charmer was an ordinary human being, by the influence of his mantra he could dance as though he were possessed by the spirit of the king of the snakes, Ananta Sesa. With an enchanting melody he sang about the pastime of Lord Krishna in the lake called Kaliya-daha where the Lord vanquished an evil serpent called Kaliya.

Haridasa listened intently to the pastime of his beloved Lord Krishna, and suddenly moved by ecstasy, he fell unconscious to the ground. When he regained consciousness, he jumped to his feet and roared like a lion, dancing in ecstasy as he babbled with joy. The snake charmer was impressed by Haridasa’s manifestation of ecstatic symptoms and stood respectfully to the side. As the various symptoms of horripilation, crying, and shivering traversed his body, he rolled in the dust, crying in love for Krishna. He remembered how his beloved Lord had mercifully saved the snake Kaliya, and as he floated in ecstatic trance, the people around him obliged by singing songs about the wonderful pastimes of the Lord. The snake charmer simply stood to the side, overcome by awe and reverence for Haridasa. When his ecstasy subsided, Haridasa left and the snake charmer resumed his performance.

Everyone who witnessed the ecstasy of Haridasa felt spiritually exhilarated and they smeared their bodies with dust from his feet. However, one cunning and deceitful *brāhmaṇa* in the crowd decided to cheat the people. “I will also dance here,” he told himself. “I can see that the people are not very intelligent. They are offering so much respect to this lowborn Haridasa just because he dances and cries; if I, a *brāhmaṇa*, also dance and cry they will certainly worship me as well.”

The *brāhmaṇa* threw himself on the ground and feigned unconsciousness as though he had fallen into trance. But as soon as he touched the ground the dancing snake charmer became furious, picked up a stick, and began beating the *brāhmaṇa* relentlessly. He struck him again and again on every part of his body until the *brāhmaṇa*, howling in agony, got up and ran away just to save his life. The snake charmer then resumed his dance while the entire crowd stood



dumbfounded. At last, a man with folded hands humbly requested the snake charmer to explain why he had stood respectfully to the side while Haridasa danced, yet he had beaten the *brāhmaṇa* for what seemed to be the same activity.

The spirit of Ananta Sesa who dwelt within the snake charmer then spoke in glorification of Srila Dasa Thakura. "The subject matter of your inquiry is very confidential. Although such a topic is rarely discussed because of its highly esoteric nature, I shall nevertheless answer your question. When Srila Dasa Thakura was dancing in ecstatic trance, each one of us felt our respect and affection for him spontaneously increase. But the deceitful *brāhmaṇa* was simply imitating Haridasa in order to get some cheap adoration from the crowd. Not out of love for Krishna, but out of enviousness toward a pure devotee, the *brāhmaṇa* threw himself on the ground and feigned ecstasy. Furthermore, he interrupted my dancing. Because he disturbed me and tried to imitate the pure devotee, I punished him severely."

"He is presenting himself as an important person by imitating some religious sentiments. This arrogant and deceitful *brāhmaṇa* has no love for Krishna. To receive the shelter of devotional service at the lotus feet of Lord Krishna, one has to become pure, free from deceit. By seeing Srila Haridasa Thakura dance one becomes liberated from material bondage; even the Supreme Lord Krishna himself dances when He sees Srila Dasa Thakura dance. The entire universe becomes cleansed of all sinful reactions just by seeing Srila Haridasa dance. He is truly worthy of his name, Haridasa Thakura, the servant of the Supreme Lord Hari, Krishna, who shines eternally like a full moon in the heart of His devotee.

"Haridasa is affectionate and compassionate towards all living entities, and he descends as the eternal servant of the Supreme Lord in each of the Lord's incarnations. He is totally free from any fault or offense towards the Supreme Lord or his devotees. Even in his dreams he never commits an offense. A moment's association with Haridasa can purify any living entity and assure him the eternal shelter of Lord Krishna's lotus feet. Even Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva constantly desire his association.

"Haridasa appeared in the family of a lowly Muslim on the order of the Supreme Lord, just to teach human society that material designations like caste, creed, birth status, and family position are all illusory and pursuing them is futile. If a pure devotee of the Lord is born in a low-class family, he is no less worthy of worship; that is the

injunction of the scriptures. On the other hand, if someone is born in a sophisticated family but does not worship the lotus feet of Sri Krishna, then his high birth is useless for he lives just like a resident of hell. Just to prove the truth of these scriptures Srila Haridasa took birth in a low-caste family. Prahlada Maharaja, one of the greatest devotees of the Lord, had previously appeared in a family of demons, and Hanuman, the greatest devotee of Lord Ramachandra, took birth in the monkey species. Similarly, Srila Haridasa appeared in a family of Muslims.

The demigods desire the touch of the pure and transcendental form of Srila Haridasa Thakura, and mother Ganges also prays that her water will be sanctified by his presence. But one need not touch Srila Dasa Thakura; simply by seeing him one is automatically freed from the eternal cycle of birth and death. Furthermore, one who sees a devotee who has taken shelter at the lotus feet of Srila Haridasa Thakura is also granted freedom from material bondage. Neither a thousand mouths nor a thousand ears would be sufficient to describe and hear the wonderful qualities of Srila Haridasa. You are a fortunate soul for your inquiry gave me an opportunity to glorify the pure devotee and gave you the opportunity to hear the transcendental topic. From the moment a person speaks the name of Srila Haridasa Thakura, his ascension to the supreme abode of Lord Krishna is guaranteed."

Nagaraja, the snake charmer, then fell silent. The assembled *brāhmaṇas* and pious gentlemen felt thoroughly satisfied by his glorification of Srila Haridasa. The assembly accepted the Nagaraja's appraisal of Haridasa, and the love each person felt for Haridasa increased.

—Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata of Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura » Chapter Sixteen: The Glories of Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura » Translated by Sarvabhavana Dasa, Edited by Kesidamana Dasa.

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KING PRITHU INSTRUCTS HIS CITIZENS

Sriman Purnaprajna Das

After receiving advice from Lord Brahma, King Prithu gave up his zeal for performing sacrifices. He then took his *avabhr̥tha* bath, marking the completion of the *yajña*. At this time, Lord Vishnu, who was very satisfied with Maharaja Prithu's performance of ninety-nine *aśvamedha- yajña*, appeared at the sacrificial arena. The Lord was accompanied by King Indra and all the demigods, great sages, as well as His personal associates, headed by Nanda and Sunanda.

Addressing Maharaja Prithu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead said, "My dear King, Indra, who had disturbed the execution of your one hundred horse sacrifices, has come here with Me to be forgiven by you. Therefore, you should excuse him. One who is advanced in intelligence naturally feels inclined to perform welfare activities for others, and thus he is considered to be the best among human beings. By always remembering that the material body is different from the Soul, Such persons are never malicious toward others.

My dear King Prithu, the devotee who is connected with Me in a relationship of intense friendship and affection, and thus is liberated from all material contamination, is fully satisfied. Due to his perfect knowledge and equal vision, such a devotee never becomes agitated by material happiness or distress. Therefore, please keep yourself always equipoised, and treat others equally while executing your duties as a king. If you continue to protect your subjects according to the teachings of the *ācāryas* in disciplic succession, they will become very happy and love you without reservation.

My dear King, you will very soon attain the good fortune of meeting the great liberated sages, the four Kumaras. I am very pleased with your elevated qualities, so I request you to ask Me for a benediction that will fulfill your heart's desire."

Indra was standing nearby, and when he heard Lord Vishnu's speech, he became very ashamed remembering how abominably he had acted. With great repentance, he prostrated himself before Maharaja Prithu and touched his feet. Being a magnanimous *vaiṣṇava*, King Prithu had already given up all malice and so he quickly picked up Indra and embraced him with great affection.

Thereafter, Prithu Maharaja very reverently worshiped the lotus feet of Lord Vishnu, and as he did so, his devotional ecstasy increased. Although the Lord was preparing to depart, He did not immediately do so, because of being greatly attracted by the pure behavior of His unalloyed devotee. King Prithu's eyes were full of tears and his voice faltered due to ecstasy, and thus he could not see the Lord very distinctly,



King Indra Offers His Obeisances to King Prithu. Artist: Parikshit Das

nor could he properly speak. Therefore, he simply embraced the Lord within his heart while standing before Him with folded hands.

Lord Vishnu who resides upon one of the planets within the universe, at first did not allow His feet to touch the ground due to playing the part of one of the demigods. However, after becoming fully satisfied with King Prithu's behaviour and character, the Lord at last placed His feet upon the earth. It appeared that Lord Vishnu had to rest His hand upon Garuda's shoulder to keep his balance, as if unaccustomed to standing upon earthly ground. Maharaja Prithu could understand that the Lord acted in this way due to affection for him, and thus, while contemplating his great fortune, various ecstatic symptoms became manifest in his body.

Finally, after wiping away the tears from his eyes, King Prithu prayed as follows: "My dear Lord, You are capable of bestowing all kinds of benedictions upon your worshippers. Therefore, why should an truly learned person ask You for the benefits that are enjoyed by the bewildered conditioned souls; or even the liberation or merging into Your existence where there is no chance to receive the nectar of Your Lotus feet? Instead, I wish to have the benediction of possessing at least one million ears so that I may be able to properly hear about Your glories from the mouths of pure devotees.

My dear Lord, if one hears of Your glories even once



in the assembly of pure devotees he will never leave that association unless he is no better than an animal. My only desire is to engage in the devotional service of Your lotus feet, just like the goddess of fortune, Lakshmi. My only fear is that She and I may quarrel due to our both being engaged in the same service, for even in the spiritual world there is competition, although it is certainly without malice.

My dear Lord, if Lakshmi happens to become angry with me for intruding upon her service, I hope You will support me, since You are very much inclined to help the poor. Even if Lakshmi goes away due to anger, I think that there will be no harm, because You are self-sufficient and so You can easily do without her.

My dear Lord, I am Your unalloyed devotee and so it is very surprising that You are trying to allure me with facilities for material enjoyment. Only persons who are bewildered by Your illusory energy and thus have forgotten their original spiritual nature harbor desires for material happiness in terms of society, friendship and love. Such benedictions are not suitable for Your pure devotee. Therefore, as the supreme father, please bestow upon me whatever You actually consider to be in my best interest."

The Lord was very pleased that Prithu Maharaja did not ask for any material benediction and so He congratulated him by saying, "My dear King, may you always remain blessed by constant engagement in My devotional service. As you have already very intelligently explained, it is only by such purity of purpose that one can cross over the insurmountable illusory energy, *māyā*. You should always be very careful to painstakingly execute My orders, for anyone who faithfully carries out My instructions will meet good fortune in all circumstances."

Thereafter, King Prithu worshiped all the demigods, great sages and other living entities who had come to his sacrificial arena by offering them sweet words and as much wealth as possible. Finally, after Maharaja Prithu once again worshipped Lord Vishnu with great respect, the Lord took His leave and then returned to His own abode after having captivated the minds of everyone, especially the King and all his priests. After the Lord's departure, King Prithu offered his obeisances and then returned to his capital, which had been very lavishly decorated to receive him.

Water scented with sandalwood and *aguru* had been sprinkled everywhere, and throughout the city there were decorations of unbroken fruit, flowers, soaked grains, minerals, and lamps. At every crossing there were pillars made of banana trees and betel nut branches. As the king entered the city gate, the citizens received him by offering auspicious articles, such as lamps, flowers and yogurt. He was also greeted by many beautiful, unmarried girls who were decorated with very costly ornaments.

As Maharaja Prithu entered his royal palace, the priests chanted the Vedic mantras, while conch shells and drums sounded and professional reciters offered prayers. Both the important and common citizens welcomed the king, and in return, he blessed them according to their desires. In spite of such an opulent reception, the king was not affected in the least. Thus, with an equipoised mind, he continued ruling without rival the seven islands of the earth. Only the *brāhmaṇas* and the members of *acyuta-gotra* (descendants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or in other words, the devotees) could disobey his irrevocable orders.

Maharaja Prithu resided in the land between the Ganga and the Yamuna, and due to his incomparable opulence, it appeared as if he were enjoying his destined fortune so as to diminish the results of his past pious activities.

Sometime later on, Maharaja Prithu began the performance of a great sacrifice in which all the foremost sages, demigods and saintly kings assembled. After having worshiped all the respectable guests according to their respective positions, when King Prithu stood up in the midst of the assembly, it appeared as if the full moon had arisen amongst the stars.

Maharaja Prithu's body was very tall and sturdy, and his complexion was fair. His eyes were as bright as the rising sun and his teeth were set beautifully in his smiling face. His black hair was very fine and curly, and his neck was marked with auspicious lines like those on a conch shell.

After being initiated into the performance of the sacrifice, King Prithu took off his royal dress and put on black deerskin. Then, just to encourage them, King Prithu glanced over all the assembled persons and addressed them in a very grave voice. His speech was very pleasing and poetic, and the meaning, although very deep, was clearly understandable. As Maharaja Prithu spoke, it appeared that he was expressing his personal realization of the Absolute Truth for the benefit of all present.

King Prithu said, O gentle members of the assembly, may all good fortune be yours! By the grace of the Supreme Lord, I have been appointed the king of this planet, and think that by the proper execution of my duties, I will be able to attain the Supreme goal of my life. Any king who does not engage his subjects according to the system of *varṇāśrama*, but instead, simply exacts taxes from them, is liable to suffer for their impious activities. Therefore, my dear citizens, please execute your duties properly while thinking of the Supreme Personality of Godhead within your hearts, so that you will mercifully benefit your king in this life, as well as after death.

Please accept my proposal, because after death, the result of an action is shared equally by the doer, its director, and its supporter. It is not that the spectacular

variety of living conditions we see have come about by chance - there is a supreme dictator behind these arrangements, and this is confirmed by all authoritative scriptures. By developing the inclination to serve the lotus feet of that supreme controller, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, suffering humanity can immediately cleanse the materialistic intentions that have accumulated in their minds over the span of innumerable births.

My dear citizens, you should enthusiastically render devotional service unto the Supreme Lord with your minds, your words, your bodies, as well as the results of your occupational duties. You should know that the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes especially pleased with those devotees who follow in His footsteps by serving of the *brāhmaṇas* and *Vaiṣṇavas*, without reservation, for they are always dear to Him, just as He is dear to them. Although the Supreme Lord certainly eats those offerings that are made into the sacrificial fire, He takes more pleasure in accepting the offerings made through the mouths of the *brāhmaṇas* and pure devotees.

O respectable persons present here, I beg to receive your blessings so that I may perpetually carry upon my crown the dust from the lotus feet of such *brāhmaṇas* and *vaiṣṇavas*. Whoever does so, acquires the qualities of those pure *brāhmaṇas*, whose only wealth is their good behavior, and thus he receives all kinds of opulence without difficulty.

After hearing Maharaja Prithu's excellent speech, the members of the assembly heartily congratulated him as follows: "My dear King, the Vedic conclusion that one can conquer heaven as the result of the activities of a good son has been practically demonstrated by you. The most sinful King Vena has been delivered from the darkest regions of hell by you, his son, just as Hiranyakasipu had formerly been rescued by his son, Prahlada.

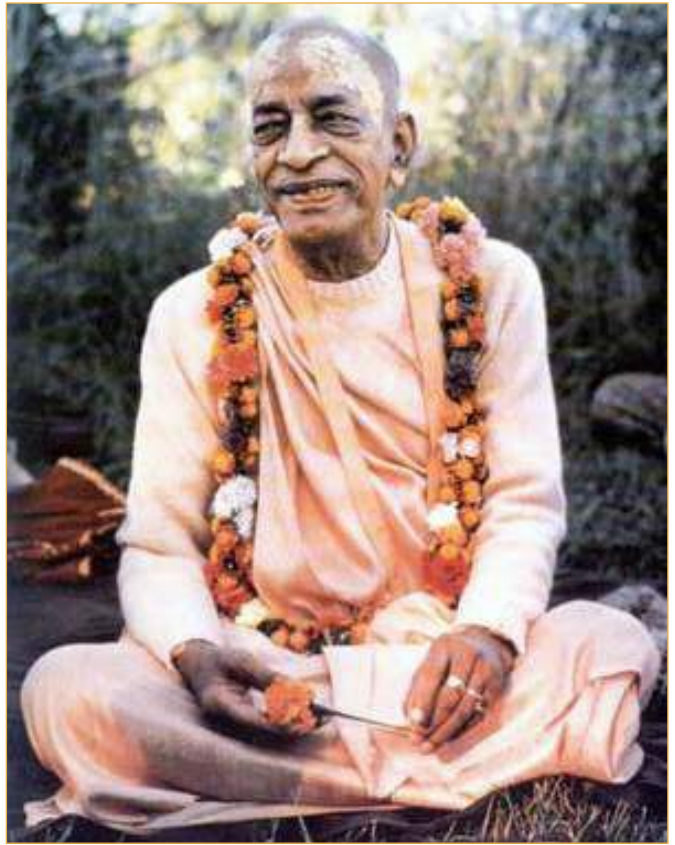
O dear King, since you are preaching the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we feel ourselves to be very fortunate, as if we are living directly under his merciful protection. Today you have opened our eyes and revealed the means for crossing to the other side of the ocean of darkness in which we are immersed."

— Adapted from the book "Śrīmad Bhagavatam in condensed form" by Purnaprajna das. ॐ

WHO IS A VAIṢṆAVA?

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada

The simple definition of *vaiṣṇava* is given by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu: "A person who immediately reminds one of the Supreme Personality of Godhead,



Krishna, is a *vaiṣṇava*." In these instruction of Maharaja Prithu, both *vaiṣṇavas* and *brāhmaṇas* are mentioned. A *vaiṣṇava* is a learned *brāhmaṇa* and is therefore designated as *brāhmaṇa-vaiṣṇava*, *brāhmaṇa-panḍita* or, alternatively *vaiṣṇava* or *brāhmaṇa*. In other words, a *vaiṣṇava* is understood as already a *brāhmaṇa*, but a *brāhmaṇa* may not be a pure *vaiṣṇava*. When a person understands his pure identity - *brahma jānāti*- he immediately becomes a *brāhmaṇa*.

In the *brāhmaṇa* stage, one's understanding of the Absolute Truth is mainly based on the impersonal view. When a *brāhmaṇa*, however, rises to the platform of personal understanding of the Supreme Godhead, he becomes a *vaiṣṇava*. Such a *vaiṣṇava* is transcendental even to a *brāhmaṇa*. In the material conception, a *brāhmaṇa* is considered to hold the highest position in human society. However a *vaiṣṇava* is transcendental even to a *brāhmaṇa* though both the *brāhmaṇa* and *vaiṣṇava* are spiritually advanced. A *brāhmaṇa*'s qualifications are mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā* as truthfulness, mental equanimity, control of the senses, the power of tolerance, simplicity, knowledge of the Absolute Truth, firm faith in the scriptures, and practical application of the brahminical qualities in life. In addition to all these qualifications, when one fully engages in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, he becomes a *vaiṣṇava*. Prithu Maharaja warns his citizens who are also partially engaged in the devotional service of the Lord to take care against

offenses to the *brāhmaṇas* and *vaiṣṇavas*. Offenses at their lotus feet are so destructive that even the descendants of Yadu who were born in the family of Lord Krishna were destroyed due such offenses. The Supreme Personality of Godhead cannot tolerate any offense at the lotus feet of *brāhmaṇas* and *vaiṣṇavas*. Sometimes, due to their powerful positions, princes or government servants neglect the position of *brāhmaṇas* and *vaiṣṇavas*, not knowing that because of their offense they will be ruined.

—*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa)* » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter 21. Instructions by Maharaja Prithu » Verse: 37. ॐ

VAIṢṆAVAS : EQUAL OR SUPERIOR TO BRĀHMANAS?

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura

According to the scriptures, *vaiṣṇavas* are accepted as equal to *brāhmaṇas* even in ordinary consideration. In this regard, Srila Sanatana Goswami has quoted many scriptural statements in his *Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā*. Initially, he quoted the statement of Lord Kapila from His conversation with Devahuti in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*(3.33.6):

*yan-nāmadheya-śravaṇānukīrtanād
yat-prahvaṇād yat-smaraṇād api kvacit
śvādo 'pi sadyaḥ savanāya kalpate
kutaḥ punas te bhagavan nu darśanāt*

“To say nothing of the spiritual advancement of persons who see the Supreme Person face to face, even a person born in a family of dog-eaters immediately becomes eligible to perform Vedic sacrifices if he once utters the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or chants about Him, hears about His pastimes, offers Him obeisances or even remembers Him.”

Again, from the topics of Prithu Maharaja in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.21.12),

*sarvatrāskhalitādeśaḥ
sapta-dvīpaika- daṇḍa-dhṛk
anyatra brāhmaṇa-kulād
anyatrācyuta-gotrataḥ*

“Maharaja Prithu was an unrivaled king and possessed the scepter for ruling all the seven islands on the surface of the globe. No one could disobey his irrevocable orders but the saintly persons, the *brāhmaṇas* and the descendants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead [the *vaiṣṇavas*].”

In other words, Maharaja Prithu viewed and treated the *brāhmaṇas* and *vaiṣṇavas* equally. Srila Sanatana



Goswami has also quoted the statement of King Puranjana from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.26.24) :

*tasmin dadhe damam aham tava vīra-patni
yo 'nyatra bhūsure-kulāt kṛta-kilbiṣas tam
paśye na vīta-bhayam unmuditaṁ tri-lokyām
anyatra vai mura-ripor itaratra dāsāt*

“O hero’s wife, kindly tell me if someone has offended you. I am prepared to give such a person punishment as long as he does not belong to the *brāhmaṇa* caste. But for the servant of *murāripu* [Krishna], I excuse no one within or beyond these three worlds. No one can freely move after offending you, for I am prepared to punish him.”

In all these places the *brāhmaṇas* and the *vaiṣṇavas* have been equally respected even in worldly dealings. At this juncture a doubt may arise. There is a protocol to show respect equally to the *brāhmaṇas* and the *vaiṣṇavas* in worldly dealings. Moreover, the *ācāryas* have mentioned the word *viprasāmya* indicating that there is non-difference to the *brāhmaṇas* on the part of the *vaiṣṇavas*. However the word *vipra* refers to the subject of comparison, the word *vaiṣṇava* refers to the object being compared, so it is certainly indicated that the object being compared is inferior to the subject of comparison. For example, if we say that the face of Devadutta is like the moon, than we can understand that the face of Devadutta is not the moon, rather it has some similarity with the moon. Therefore, in beauty, the face is inferior to the moon. Considering in this way, some less-intelligent people may conclude that the word *viprasāmya* indicates that although the



vaiṣṇavas are equal to the *brāhmaṇas* in some ways, they are nevertheless inferior to the *brāhmaṇas*.

But before concluding in this way, one should patiently deliberate how it has been described everywhere that the beauty of the moon is more beautiful than a man's face. Furthermore it has always been the practice to exhibit the similarities of a more beautiful and famous object with a less beautiful and ordinary object, and thus the beauty of the latter has been established. In this type of comparison the fault of exaggeration may often arise. But if we carefully analyze the statements of the scriptures, then we will find that the devotees of the Lord have always been established as the topmost. If we study the commentary of Srila Sanatana Goswami with careful attention, then we will know that a *vaiṣṇava* has not been compared with a *brāhmaṇa* in the same way that a face is compared with the moon. Rather the fact that a *vaiṣṇava* is not inferior to a *brāhmaṇa* in any way as far as external prestige is concerned has been shown with gross external worldly considerations to envious people who are unqualified to see others' supremacy.

For example, when the *śāstras* explain the form of the Supreme Lord to a devotee who is attached to the opulent feature of the Lord, it conceals the most wonderfully sweet form of Sri Krishna and depicts Him with names like Narayana, Kṣīrodakashayi Viṣṇu, or Brahman. By this process, the complete eternal form of Sri Krishna is not indicated, yet at the same time it is not a lie to call Krishna Kṣīrodakashayi or Narayana. The knowers of the science of Krishna understand that just as a person who possesses a million rupees also possesses a hundred rupees or a thousand rupees; just as Brahman, Narayana, and Kṣīrodakashayi Viṣṇu are inseparably present in the form of Krishna; and that when Sri Krishna is explained as equal to Narayana, actually Sri Krishna is not inferior to Narayana, rather He is the source of Narayana. Similarly, though a *vaiṣṇava* is accepted as equal to a *brāhmaṇa* in the primary worldly consideration, yet a *vaiṣṇava* is nothing less than a *brāhmaṇa*, rather he is the crest jewel on the head of the *brāhmaṇa* communities, because a worshiper of the Supreme Lord who knows Brahman perfectly is a *vaiṣṇava*. If by the word *viprasāmya* it is concluded that a *vaiṣṇava* is inferior to a *brāhmaṇa* or only equal to a *brāhmaṇa*, then the behavior of *śāstras* and *sādhus* would not have proved opposite. When *vaiṣṇavas* have been glorified thousands of times as greater than *brāhmaṇas*, then it cannot be concluded that the word *viprasāmya* means that a *vaiṣṇava* is inferior or equal to a *brāhmaṇa*. Among the *brāhmaṇas* and *vaiṣṇavas*, the qualities of the *brāhmaṇas* are a common factor. Therefore brahmanism or brahminical qualities are eternally present in *vaiṣṇavas*, as the word *viprasāmya* indicates. Had it been a fact that *brāhmaṇas* were glorified in many places in the scriptures as greater than *vaiṣṇavas*, then we would have accepted the meaning of the word *viprasāmya* in the same way as

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

the comparison of a face with the moon.

It is mentioned in the *Garuḍa Purāṇa*:

*brāhmaṇānām sahasrebhyaḥ satra-yājī viśiṣyate
satra-yājī- sahasrebhyaḥ sarva-vedānta- pāragāḥ
sarva-vedānta- vit-koṭyā viṣṇu-bhakto viśiṣyate*

“Out of thousands of *brāhmaṇas*, one is qualified to perform sacrifices. Out of many thousands of such qualified *brāhmaṇas* expert in sacrificial offerings, one learned *brāhmaṇa* may have passed beyond all Vedic knowledge. Among many such *brāhmaṇas*, one who is a devotee of Lord Viṣṇu is the best.”

In *Nārādīya Purāṇa* it is stated: *śvapaco 'pi mahīpāla viṣṇor bhakto dvijādhipaḥ* —“O king, a devotee of Lord Viṣṇu, though born in a dog-eater family, is higher than a *brāhmaṇa*.”

The *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* quotes the *Itihāsa-samuccaya*, wherein the Lord states:

*na me 'bhaktaś catur-vedī
mad-bhaktaḥ śva-pacaḥ priyaḥ
tasmai deyaṁ tato grāhyaṁ
sa ca pūjyo yathā hy aham*

“Even though a person is a very learned scholar of the Sanskrit Vedic literatures, he is not accepted as My devotee unless he is pure in devotional service. However, even though a person is born in a family of dog-eaters, he is very dear to Me if he is a pure devotee who has no motive to enjoy fruitive activity or mental speculation. Indeed, all respect should be given to him, and whatever he offers should be accepted. Such devotees are as worshipable as I am.”

If the word *viprasāmya* indicated that a *vaiṣṇava* should be considered equal to, or even inferior to a *brāhmaṇa*, then the Supreme Lord would have advised us to see a non-devotee *brāhmaṇa* who knows the four Vedas and a devotee of the Lord who is born in a dog-eater family on an equal level. That is not the case though. Rather, He says that a devotee is non-different from Himself, and is as worshipable as Himself. The Lord further states that an ordinary *brāhmaṇa* who knows the four Vedas is even lower than a dog-eater because he is devoid of devotion to Him. This is confirmed by the Lord as follows:

*caṇḍālo 'pi dvija-śreṣṭho
hari-bhakti-parāyaṇaḥ
hari-bhakti-vihīnaś ca dvijo 'pi śvapacādhamaḥ*

“Even if one is born in the family of a *caṇḍāla*, if one engages in the devotional service of the Lord, he becomes the best of *brāhmaṇas*. But a *brāhmaṇa* who



is devoid of devotional service is on the level of the lowest dog-eater.”

It is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.9.10) as follows:

*viprād dvi-ṣaḍ-guṇa-yutād aravinda-nābha-
pādāravinda-vimukhāt śvapacāṁ variṣṭham
manye tad-arpita-mano-vacanehitārtha-
prāṇam punāti sa kulam na tu bhūrimānaḥ*

The *vaiṣṇavas* who are attached to devotional service are naturally indifferent to fruitive activities. If, according to the considerations of the materialists, the word *viprasāmya* indicated that a *vaiṣṇava* is inferior or equal to a *brāhmaṇa*, then the above-mentioned verse from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* would not have described as follows: “If a *brāhmaṇa* has all twelve of the brahminical qualifications [as they are stated in the book called *Sanat-sujāta*] but is not a devotee and is averse to the lotus feet of the Lord, he is certainly lower than a devotee who is a dog-eater but who has dedicated everything—mind, words, activities, wealth and life—to the Supreme Lord. Such a devotee is better than such a *brāhmaṇa* because the devotee can purify his whole family, whereas the so-called *brāhmaṇa* in a position of false prestige cannot purify even himself.”

Srila Sanatana Goswami has further written: *viprād dvi-ṣaḍ-guṇa-yutād ity ādi-vacanaiva vaiṣṇava-brāhmaṇebhyo nīca-jāti-jātānām api vaiṣṇavānām śreṣṭhyam*—“it has been established by various statements such as *viprād dvi-ṣaḍ* that a low-born *vaiṣṇava* is greater than a non-devotee *brāhmaṇa*.” When such clear understanding is there, then other concocted narrow opinions are understood to be in the language of Srila Sanatana Goswami as *mātsarya-paraiḥ smārtaiḥ kaiścit kalpitam iti mantavyam*—“the wicked imagination of some envious *smārtas*.”

—*Brāhmaṇa and Vaiṣṇava, The conclusive comparison between brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas, Sri Srila Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. Translated by Bhumiapati Dāsa.* ❧

WHY HAVE THE UPPER CLASS BRĀHMAṆAS NOT TAKEN UP VAIṢṆAVA-DHARMA?

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura

Chaturbhuja, “I admit that these days there are hardly any good *paṇḍitas*. Nevertheless, please tell me why the upper class *brāhmaṇas* have not taken up *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. The brahminical caste is a *sāttvikā* group established in the mode of goodness. They are generally inclined towards the path of truth and noble deeds, yet why are they mostly antagonistic to *vaiṣṇava-dharma*?”

Vaishanava Das Babaji, “Please note that Sri Ramanuja, Sri Madhvacharya, Sri Vishnusvami, and Sri

Nimbadiya were all *brāhmaṇas* by birth. Each of them had thousands of disciples who were *brāhmaṇas*. Our Sri Chaitanya of Bengal was a Vedic *brāhmaṇa*; Sri Nityananda was a high caste *rādhīya-brāhmaṇa*; and Sri Advaita Prabhu was a *vārendra-brāhmaṇa*. Even the *gosvāmīs* and *mahātmās*, the intimate associates of Sri Chaitanya, were mostly from the *brāhmaṇa* class. In addition, an impressive number of *brāhmaṇa* stalwarts have joined the ranks of the *vaiṣṇava* preachers to disseminate this pure *vaiṣṇava-dharma* worldwide. Therefore, why do you claim that higher caste *brāhmaṇas* do not admire *vaiṣṇava-dharma*?

“We know that mostly all the high-born *brāhmaṇas* hold *vaiṣṇava-dharma* in esteem. However, some, as a result of bad hereditary traits, depraved company, and wrong upbringing are hostile towards the *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. Of course, this attitude certainly does not give a good account of their *brāhmaṇa* background. It simply reflects their misfortune and degradation.

“The *śāstras* hold the view that particularly in Kali-yuga, properly qualified *brāhmaṇas* are scarce. These few select and qualified *brāhmaṇas* are *vaiṣṇavas*. From the moment of initiation into the *gāyatrī-mantra*—the *mantra* that personifies the Vedas and who is a devotee of Sri Vishnu—a *brāhmaṇa* is factually embracing *vaiṣṇava-dharma* by having been thus initiated into a purely *vaiṣṇava-mantra*. Yet, on account of the ill influence of the deteriorating times, the deluded *brāhmaṇa* unfortunately accepts re-initiation by bogus non-Vedic methods and rejects his original *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. However, this small number of mislead *vaiṣṇava-brāhmaṇas* must not lead you to draw a wrong conclusion.”

—*Jaiva-dharma, Translated by: Sarvabhāvana dāsa, Chapter Ten: The Age and History of Nitya-dharma.* ❧



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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**APPEARANCE OF FOUR KUMARAS
IN THE ASSEMBLY OF MAHARAJA PRITHU**
Sri Maitreya Rṣi

While the citizens were praying to the most powerful King Prithu, the four Kumaras, who were as bright as the sun, descended from the sky. By seeing the glowing effulgence of the four Kumaras, the masters of all mystic power, the King and his associates could immediately recognize them. Upon the arrival of the four Kumaras, Prithu Maharaja was greatly anxious to receive them. Therefore the King, with all his officers, very hastily got up, just as a conditioned soul whose senses are spontaneously attracted by the sense objects. When the great sages accepted the reception offered according to the instructions of the *śāstras*, and then took their seats offered by the King, the King, influenced by the glories of the sages, immediately bowed down. Thus he worshiped the four Kumaras. After this, the King took the water which had washed the lotus feet of the Kumaras and sprinkled it over his hair. By such respectful actions, the King, as an exemplary personality, showed how to receive a spiritually advanced personality.

The four great sages were elder to Lord Shiva, and when they were seated on the golden throne, they appeared just like fire blazing on an altar. Maharaja Prithu, out of his great gentleness and respect for them, began to speak with great restraint as follows: My dear great sages, auspiciousness personified, it is very difficult for even the mystic yogis to see you. Indeed, you are very rarely seen. I do not know

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

what kind of pious activity I performed for you to grace me by appearing before me without difficulty.

*kiṁ tasya durlabhataram
iha loke paratra ca
yasya viprāḥ prasīdanti
śivo viṣṇuś ca sānuḡaḥ*

Any person upon whom the *brāhmaṇas* and *vaiṣṇavas* are pleased can achieve anything which is very rare to obtain in this world as well as after death. Not only that, but one also receives the favor of the auspicious Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu, who accompany the *brāhmaṇas* and *vaiṣṇavas*.

Although you are traveling in all planetary systems, people cannot know you, just as they cannot know the Supersoul, although He is within everyone's heart as the witness of everything. Even Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva cannot understand the Supersoul. A person who is not very rich and is attached to family life becomes highly glorified when saintly persons are present in his home. The master and servants who are engaged in offering the exalted visitors water, a sitting place and paraphernalia for reception are glorified, and the home itself is also glorified. On the contrary, even though full of all opulence and material prosperity, any householder's house where the devotees of the Lord are never allowed to come in, and where there is no water for washing their feet, is to be considered a tree in which all venomous serpents live.

*svāgatam vo dvija-śreṣṭhā
yad-vratāni mumukṣavaḥ
caranti śraddhayā dhūrā
bālā eva brhanti ca*

Maharaja Prithu offered his welcome to the four Kumaras, addressing them as the best of the *brāhmaṇas*. He welcomed them, saying: From the beginning of your birth you strictly observed the vows of celibacy, and although you are experienced in the path of liberation, you are keeping yourselves just like small children. Prithu Maharaja inquired from the sages about persons entangled in this dangerous material existence because of their previous actions. Could such persons, whose only aim is sense gratification, be blessed with any good fortune? My dear sirs, there is no need to ask about your good and bad fortune because you are always absorbed in spiritual bliss. The mental concoction of the auspicious and inauspicious does not exist in you. I am completely assured that personalities like you are the only friends for persons who are blazing in the fire of material existence. I therefore ask you how in this material world we can very soon achieve the ultimate goal of life. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is always anxious to elevate the conditioned living entities, who are His parts and parcels, and for



their special benefit the Lord travels all over the world in the form of self-realized persons like you. Thus Sanat-kumara, the best of the celibates, after hearing the speech of Prithu Maharaja, which was meaningful, appropriate, full of precise words and very sweet to hear, smiled with full satisfaction and began to speak as follows.

Sanat-kumara said: My dear King Prithu, You have asked very appropriate questions. Such questions are beneficial for all living entities which is why they are raised by you, who are always thinking of the good of others. Although you know everything, you ask such questions because that is the behavior of saintly persons. Such intelligence is befitting your position. When there is a congregation of devotees, their discussions, questions and answers become conclusive to both the speaker and the audience. Thus such a meeting is beneficial for everyone's real happiness.

*asty eva rājan bhavato madhudviṣaḥ
pādāravindasya guṇānuvādane
ratir durāpā vidhunoti naiṣṭhikī
kāmaṁ kaṣāyaṁ malam antar-ātmanaḥ*

My dear King, you already have an inclination to glorify the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such attachment is very difficult to achieve, but when one has attained such unflinching faith in the Lord, it automatically cleanses lusty desires from the core of the heart.

It has been conclusively decided in the scriptures, after due consideration, that the ultimate goal for the welfare of human society is detachment from the bodily concept of life and increased and steadfast attachment for the Supreme Lord, who is transcendental, beyond the modes of material nature. Attachment for the Supreme can be increased by practicing devotional service, inquiring about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, applying *bhakti-yoga* in life, worshiping the Yogesvara, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and by hearing and chanting about the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. These actions are pious in themselves.

One has to make progress in spiritual life by not associating with persons who are simply interested in sense gratification and making money. Not only such persons, but one who associates with such persons should be avoided. One should mold his life in such a way that he cannot live in peace without drinking the nectar of the glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari. One can be thus elevated by being disgusted with the taste for sense enjoyment. A candidate for spiritual advancement must be nonviolent, must follow in the footsteps of great *ācāryas*, must always remember the nectar of the pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, must follow the regulative principles without material desire and, while following the regulative principles, should not blaspheme others. Such a person should lead a very simple life and not be disturbed by the duality of opposing elements. He

should learn to tolerate them. Thus devoted to the Supreme Lord he should gradually increase the culture of devotional service by constant hearing of the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. These pastimes are like ornamental decorations on the ears of devotees. By rendering devotional service and transcending the material qualities, one can easily be fixed in transcendence in the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Upon becoming fixed in his attachment to the Supreme Personality of Godhead by the grace of the spiritual master and by awakening knowledge and detachment, the living entity, situated within the heart of the body and covered by the five elements, burns up his material surroundings exactly as fire, arising from wood, burns the wood itself.

When a person becomes devoid of all material desires and liberated from all material qualities, he transcends distinctions between actions executed externally and internally. At that time the difference between the soul and the Supersoul, which was existing before self-realization, is annihilated. When a dream is over, there is no longer a distinction between the dream and the dreamer. When the soul exists for sense gratification, he creates different desires, and for that reason he becomes subjected to designations. But when one is in the transcendental position, he is no longer interested in anything except fulfilling the desires of the Lord. Only because of different causes does a person see a difference between himself and others, just as one sees the reflection of a body appearing differently manifested on water, on oil or in a mirror. When one's mind and senses are attracted to sense objects for enjoyment, the mind becomes agitated. As a result of continually thinking of sense objects, one's real consciousness almost becomes lost, like the water in a lake that is gradually sucked up by the big grass straws on its bank. When one deviates from his original consciousness, he loses the capacity to remember his previous position or recognize his present one. When remembrance is lost, all knowledge acquired is based on a false foundation. When this occurs, learned scholars consider that the soul is lost. There is no stronger obstruction to one's self-interest than thinking other subject matters to be more pleasing than one's self-realization. For human society, constantly thinking of how to earn money and apply it for sense gratification brings about the destruction of everyone's interests. When one becomes devoid of knowledge and devotional service, he enters into species of life like those of trees and stones.

Those who seriously desire to cross the ocean of nescience must not associate with the modes of ignorance, for hedonistic activities are the greatest obstructions to realization of religious principles, economic development, regulated sense gratification and, at last, liberation. Out of the four principles — namely religion, economic development, sense gratification and liberation — liberation has to be taken very seriously. The other three are subject to destruction by the stringent law of nature — death.

We accept as blessings different states of higher life,



Prithu and Four Kumaras, Artists: Jadurani Dasi

distinguishing them from lower states of life, but we should know that such distinctions exist only in relation to the interchange of the modes of material nature. Actually these states of life have no permanent existence, for all of them will be destroyed by the supreme controller.

Therefore, my dear King Prithu, try to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is living within everyone's heart along with the individual soul, in each and every body, either moving or not moving. The individual souls are fully covered by the gross material body and subtle body made of the life air and intelligence. The Supreme Personality of Godhead manifests Himself as one with the cause and effect within this body. One who has transcended the illusory energy by deliberate consideration - which clears the misconception of a snake for a rope - can understand that the Paramatma is eternally transcendental to the material creation and situated in pure internal energy. Thus the Lord is transcendental to all material contamination. Unto Him only must one surrender. The devotees, who are always engaged in the service of the toes of the lotus feet of the Lord, can very easily overcome hard-knotted desires for fruitive activities. Because this is very difficult, the nondevotees — the *jñānīs* and *yogī* — although trying to stop the waves of sense gratification, cannot do so. Therefore you are advised to engage in the devotional service of Krishna, the son of Vasudeva. The ocean of nescience is very difficult to cross because it is infested with many dangerous sharks. Although those who are non-devotees undergo severe austerities and penances to cross that ocean, we recommend that you simply take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord, which are like boats for crossing the ocean. Although the ocean is difficult to cross, by taking shelter of His lotus feet you will overcome all dangers.

Being thus enlightened in complete spiritual knowledge by the son of Brahma — one of the Kumaras, who was complete in spiritual knowledge — the King worshiped them all in the following words: O *brāhmaṇa*, O powerful one, formerly Lord Vishnu showed me His causeless mercy, indicating that you would come to my house, and to confirm that blessing, you have all come. My dear *brāhmaṇa*, you have carried out the order thoroughly because you are as compassionate as the Lord. It is my duty, therefore, to offer you something, but all I possess are but remnants of food taken by great saintly persons. What shall I give? Therefore, my dear *brāhmaṇas*, my life, wife, children, home, furniture and household paraphernalia, my kingdom, strength, land and especially my treasury are all offered unto you. Since only a person who is completely educated according to the principles of Vedic knowledge deserves to be commander-in-chief, ruler of the state, the first to chastise or the proprietor of the whole planet, Prithu Maharaja offered everything to the Kumaras. The *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras* eat their food by virtue of the *brāhmaṇas'* mercy. It is the *brāhmaṇas* who enjoy their own property, clothe themselves with their own property and give charity with their own property.

How can such persons, who have rendered unlimited service by explaining the path of self-realization in relation to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and whose explanations are given for our enlightenment with complete conviction and Vedic evidence, be repaid except by folded palms containing water for their satisfaction? Such great personalities can be satisfied only by their own activities, which are displayed to all parts of human society out of their unlimited mercy. Being thus worshiped by Maharaja Prithu, the four Kumaras, who were masters of devotional service, became very pleased. Indeed, they appeared in the sky and praised the character of the King, and everyone observed them. Amongst great personalities, Maharaja Prithu was the chief by virtue of his fixed position in relation to spiritual enlightenment. He remained satisfied as one who has achieved all success in spiritual understanding. Being self-satisfied, Maharaja Prithu executed his duties as perfectly as possible according to the time and his situation, strength and financial position. His only aim in all his activities was to satisfy the Absolute Truth. In this way, he dutifully acted. Maharaja Prithu completely designated himself as an eternal servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, transcendental to material nature. Consequently all the fruits of his activities were dedicated to the Lord, and he always thought of himself as the servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the proprietor of everything.

Maharaja Prithu, who was very opulent due to the prosperity of his entire empire, remained at home as a householder. Since he was never inclined to utilize his opulence for the gratification of his senses, he remained unattached, exactly like the sun, which is unaffected in all circumstances. Being situated in the liberated position of devotional service, Prithu Maharaja not only performed



all fruitive activities but also begot five sons by his wife, Arci. Indeed, all his sons were begotten according to his own desire. After begetting five sons, named Vijitasva, Dhumrakesa, Haryaksa, Dravina and Vrka, Prithu Maharaja continued to rule the planet. He accepted all the qualities of the deities who governed all other planets. Since Maharaja Prithu was a perfect devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he wanted to protect the Lord's creation by pleasing the various citizens according to their various desires. Therefore Prithu Maharaja used to please them in all respects by his words, mentality, works and gentle behavior. Maharaja Prithu became as celebrated a king as *soma-rāja*, the king of the moon. He was also powerful and exacting, just like the sun-god, who distributes heat and light and at the same time exacts all the planetary waters. Maharaja Prithu was so strong and powerful that no one could disobey his orders, any more than one could conquer fire itself. He was so strong that he was compared to Indra, the King of heaven, whose power is insuperable.

On the other hand, Maharaja Prithu was also as tolerant as the earth, and in fulfilling various desires of human society, he was like heaven itself. Just as rainfall satisfies everyone's desires, Maharaja Prithu used to satisfy everyone. He was like the sea in that no one could understand his depths, and he was like Meru, the king of hills, in the fixity of his purpose. Maharaja Prithu's intelligence and education were exactly like that of Yamaraja, the superintendent of death. His opulence was comparable to the Himalaya Mountains, where all valuable jewels and metals are stored. He possessed great riches like Kuvera, the treasurer of the heavenly planets, and no one could ever know his confidential matters, for they were like the demigod Varuna's. In his bodily strength and in the strength of his senses, Maharaja Prithu was as strong as the wind, which can go anywhere and everywhere. As far as his intolerance was concerned, he was just like the all-powerful Rudra expansion of Lord Shiva, or Sada Shiva. In his bodily beauty he was just like Cupid, and in his thoughtfulness he was like a lion. In his affection he was just like Svayambhuva Manu, and in his ability to control he was like Lord Brahma. In his personal behavior, Prithu Maharaja exhibited all good qualities, and in spiritual knowledge he was exactly like Brhaspati. In self-control he was like the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. As far as his devotional service was concerned, he was a great follower of devotees who were attached to cow protection and the rendering of all service to the spiritual master and the *brāhmaṇas*. He was perfect in his shyness and in his gentle behavior, and when he engaged in some philanthropic activity, he worked as if he were working for his own self. Throughout the whole universe — in the higher, lower and middle planetary systems — Prithu Maharaja's reputation was loudly declared, and all ladies and saintly persons heard his glories, which were as sweet as the glories of Lord Ramacandra.

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » SB 4.22: Prṛthu Mahārāja's Meeting with the Four Kumāras; Verse: 1-63.* ॐ

HOW TO RECEIVE A SAINTLY PERSON?

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Materially if a man is not very rich, he is not glorious, and spiritually if a man is too attached to family life, he is also not glorious. But saintly persons are quite ready to visit the house of a poor man or a man who is attached to material family life. When this happens, the owner of the house and his servants are glorified because they offer water for washing his feet, sitting places and other things to receive him. The conclusion is that if a saintly person goes to the house of even an unimportant man, such a person becomes glorious by his blessings. It is therefore the Vedic system that a householder invite a saintly person to his home in order to receive his blessings. This system is still current in India, and therefore saintly persons, wherever they go, are hosted by the householders, who in turn get an opportunity to receive transcendental knowledge. It is the duty of a *sannyāsī*, therefore, to travel everywhere just to favor the householders, who are generally ignorant of the values of spiritual life.

It may be argued that all householders are not very rich and that one cannot receive great saintly persons or preachers because they are always accompanied by their disciples. If a householder is to receive a saintly person, he has to receive his entourage also. It is said in the *sāstras* that Durvasa Muni was always accompanied by sixty thousand disciples and that if there was a little discrepancy in their reception, he would be very angry and would sometimes curse the host. The fact is that every householder, regardless of his position or economic condition, can at least receive saintly guests with great devotion and offer them drinking water, for drinking water is always available. In India the custom is that even an ordinary person is offered a glass of water if he suddenly visits and one cannot offer him foodstuff. If there is no water, then one can offer a sitting place, even if it is on straw mats. And if one has no straw mat, he can immediately cleanse the ground and ask the guest to sit there. Supposing that a householder cannot even do that, then with folded hands he can simply receive the guest, saying, "Welcome." And if he cannot do that, then he should feel very sorry for his poor condition and shed tears and simply offer obeisances with his whole family, wife and children. In this way he can satisfy any guest, even if the guest is a saintly

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter 22: Prṛthu Mahārāja's Meeting with the Four Kumāras » Verse: 10.* ॐ

SĀDHU-SAṄGA

Srila Bhaktivinod Thakura

When does a living entity develop a desire for associating with saintly persons?



“As a result of heaps of pious activities and due to the mercy of the Lord, a living entity’s desire for material existence becomes weak. Then he automatically develops a desire for *sādhū-saṅga*. By discussing the topics of Krishna in the association of the devotees one develops faith, and when one gradually cultivates Krishna consciousness with more determination then one develops 'greed' for attaining Krishna. On such a platform one learns the art of performing bhajana by taking shelter at the lotus feet of a bonafide pure spiritual master.”

—Sajjana Toṣaṇī 11/5

What is the necessity for *sādhū-saṅga*?

“One should follow the characteristics of the *sādhūs* and learn the scriptural conclusions from them.”

—Sajjana Toṣaṇī 11/6

What is taking shelter at the lotus feet of a spiritual master?

“Associating with an intimate devotee of the Lord is taking shelter at the lotus feet of a spiritual master.”

—Sajjana Toṣaṇī 2/1

Do the *sādhūs* ever become selfish?

“The demigods may become selfish but the devotees never become selfish. Therefore persons who desire their own benefit should eagerly hanker after wherever there is a person desiring pure love, wherever there is a discussion of Krishna’s topics, wherever there is *hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana*, wherever there is a desire for hearing the glories of Krishna, and wherever there is a glorification of Krishna and the *Vaiṣṇavas*.”

—Commentary on Bhajanāmṛtaṁ

Whose association is desirable? By whose association can one make advancement on the path of spiritual life?

“One who has awakened pure devotional service in his heart is an unalloyed devotee of Krishna. His association is most desirable. The association of *madhyama-adhikārī* is also suitable. A practitioner of devotional service should always take shelter of devotees who are superior to him. In this way he can make advancement on the spiritual path.”

—Commentary on Bhajanāmṛtaṁ

Does one waste time by simply sitting near a *Vaiṣṇava*?

“The foremost instruction of Sri Ramanujacarya is this: “If you cannot purify yourself by any endeavor whatsoever, then just go sit with the *Vaiṣṇavas* and you will achieve all auspiciousness.”

—Sajjana Toṣaṇī 11/11

Is there any direct proof of auspiciousness attained due to the association with the *Vaiṣṇavas*?

“By observing the pure characteristics of a devotee, in a

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

very short time a person’s mind is changed, his attachment for sense enjoyment decreases, and the seedling of bhakti sprouts in the heart. One even gradually develops a taste for the *vaiṣṇavas*; food and behavior. We have seen how by associating with *vaiṣṇavas*, people have given up many *anarthas*—taste for associating with women, thirst for wealth, desire for sense enjoyment and liberation, inclination for *karma* and *jñāna*, eating meat and fish, drinking wine, smoking tobacco, and the desire to chew pan. By observing a *vaiṣṇava*’s quality of not uselessly wasting time, many people have easily given up *anarthas* such as laziness, oversleeping, useless talk, urge of speech, etc. We have also seen that by associating with *vaiṣṇavas* for some period of time, someone’s cheating propensity and desire for fame have been destroyed. We have seen with our own eyes that by associating with *vaiṣṇavas* with a little affection, all other association, such as attachment for prejudices, has been vanquished. Those who are attached to winning fights, those who are expert at attaining dominion, those who are eager to accumulate great wealth—all such types of people have attained devotional service by being purified in the association of *vaiṣṇavas*. Even the hearts of persons who think, “I will defeat the world by my arguments and attain supremacy,” have been pacified. Without the association of *vaiṣṇavas* there is no alternative for rectifying the attachment for prejudices and false thinking.”

—Sajjana Toṣaṇī 11/11

What does a *sādhū* do?

“The *sādhūs* award divine eyes to our hearts.”

—Bhāgavatārka Maricimālā 15/17

What is the nature of a *sādhū*?

“A *sādhū* never find faults in others. He respects whatever good qualities they have- be they minute or great. ”

Is it proper to try to ascertain the difference between a pure *vaiṣṇava* and a cheater?

“In order to illustrate pure devotional service and the pure devotees Sri Krishnadas Kaviraja Goswami has discussed the method for ascertaining the level of a devotees. According to that method even today we can distinguish between the pure *vaiṣṇavas* and the cheaters. No compromise should be made in this regard. There is no possibility for the living entities to achieve auspiciousness without *sādhū-saṅga*. Therefore the pure *vaiṣṇavas* should certainly be properly identified.”

—Sajjana Toṣaṇī 10/5

What is the piety that awards one devotional service?

“Associating with the devotees is the only piety that awards one devotional service.”

—Jaiva Dharma, Chapter -17

What is the result of pretentious *sādhū-saṅga*?

“ Many people think that by serving the lotus feet of a *sādhū*, by offering obeisances to him, by drinking the water



MAHARAJA PRITHU DEPARTS FOR SPIRITUAL WORLD

Sriman Purnaprajna Das

that has washed his feet, by honoring his remnants and by giving him some donation they can get the advantage of *sādhū-saṅga*. Although by such activities one can respect a *sādhū* and gain something, this is not actual *sādhū-saṅga*. If one carefully searches for the pure characteristics and nature of the pure devotees and then emulates them without duplicity, he can attain pure devotional service to Krishna.

A materialist approaches a *sādhū*, offers obeisances, and prays as follows—‘Oh merciful one! Please be kind to me, I am very poor and fallen therefore how will my attachment for material existence be destroyed?’ These words of the materialists are simply cheating. The materialists consider that accumulating wealth and collecting material objects are the chief goals of life. Their hearts are always filled with pride due to their possessing material opulence. Thus they artificially make a show of humility and devotion with a fear that by the curse of the *sādhū*s their desire for obtaining name, fame and sense gratification may be destroyed. If a *sādhū* blesses them by saying ‘O dear! may your material desires, wealth and followers be destroyed’. Then the materialists quickly say ‘O *Sādhū Mahārāja* ! please do not give us such a benediction. Such a benediction is simply a curse, and always yields inauspiciousness’. Such behavior of the materialists towards the *sādhū* is only cheating.

In the course of our life we may meet with many *sādhū*s but due to our artificial behavior we do not gain anything from their association. Therefore if we can always carefully pattern oneself upon the pure characteristics of the saintly persons, with spontaneous faith, then we can certainly make advancement by their association. We should always remember this while approaching a *sādhū* and try our level best to realize the pure nature and character of the *sādhū*s and build our own character like them. This is the teachings of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.”

What kind of *vaiṣṇava* should one associate with?

“One should associate with a *vaiṣṇava* who is superior to oneself.”

—*Śrī Mañāḥ Śikṣā, Verse 10*

Should one indulge in gossiping with a *Sādhū*? What is actual *Sādhū Sanga*?

“If one approaches a *sādhū* and converse with him like a mundane man, saying banal things like ‘It is very hot today; I feel healthier in other places; that man is very nice; this year we will make a profit from harvesting paddy and wheat,’ then he is not gaining any thing from such supposed *sādhū-saṅga*. Being absorbed in his own ecstasy a *sādhū* may reply to one or two questions of this nature, but this does not award the person devotion to Krishna which is the real benefit of *sādhū-saṅga*. One should approach a *sādhū* with love and devotion and discuss with him the topics of the Supreme Lord. Then one can attain devotional service.”

—*Sajjana Toṣaṇī 10/4*

—Taken from *Bhaktivinoda Vānī Vāibhāva* Published by *Īṣvara dāsa*.

The four Kumars were very satisfied with Maharaja Prithu’s reception, and so with great pleasure they ascended into the sky to praise his character within everyone’s hearing. After the departure of the Kumars, Maharaja Prithu continued to rule his kingdom, his only aim being to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. King Prithu begot five sons by his wife Arci, named Vijitasva, Dhumrakesha, Haryaksa, Dravina and Vrka.

Maharaja Prithu was as strong as Indra, the King of heaven, and at the same time he was as tolerant as the earth. Just as rainfall satisfies everyone’s desires, Maharaja Prithu distributed his mercy to all, and while engaged in executing some philanthropic work, he endeavored just as he were working for his own self. He was like the sea in that no one could understand his depths and like Mount Meru he was fixed in his purpose. Maharaja Prithu’s opulence was compared with the Himalayan Mountains, where all kinds of valuable metals and jewels are stocked. Like the wind, his influence was felt everywhere. In terms of bodily beauty, he was just like Cupid, in thoughtfulness he was like a lion, and in terms of self control he seemed to rival the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Maharaja Prithu’s reputation was loudly declared throughout the entire universe, and the ladies and devotees who heard about him found his character and activities as pleasing as Lord Ramchandra’s.

Finally when Maharaja Prithu saw that he was getting old, he divided his wealth by giving pensions to all kinds of public servants, and then he handed over the rule of the earth to his sons. While surrounded by the citizens, who were shedding tears of grief due to this impending separation, King Prithu departed from his palace and proceeded to the forest, along with his wife, to perform austerities. While living in the forest, King Prithu sometimes ate the roots of trees, and sometimes ate fruit and dry leaves. Sometimes, for weeks altogether, he would only drink water, and at last, he subsisted by simply breathing air. During the summer, King Prithu sat under the hot sun while keeping himself surrounded on all four sides with blazing fires. During the rainy season he exposed himself to the harsh weather, and in the winter he entered the river and stood with water up to his neck. The king would lie down on the bare floor at night; he completely refrained from discharging semen, and he performed many other austerities meant for controlling the senses and life-air.

Because it was Satya-yug, Maharaja Prithu practiced *aṣṭāṅga-yog* as a means for performing devotional service, and as a result, he developed unflinching love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By constantly thinking of the lotus feet of the Lord, King Prithu became completely detached from the material conception of life, and thus was released from the clutches of false ego. At that time he could directly see the Lord as Paramatma, seated within his heart.



Arci and Prithu, Artists: Puskar Dasa

Due to having attained the perfect platform of being able to receive instructions directly from the Supreme Lord, King Prithu gave up the mechanical practice of *yoga*.

Finally, desiring to give up his body without waiting for a natural death, Maharaja Prithu sat down in a particular *yoga* posture which began with he blocking his anus with his ankles. By utilizing the knowledge of *yoga* that he had formerly acquired, the king gradually raised his life-air up to the navel, then the heart, the throat, and then to a position between the eyebrows. From there, Maharaja Prithu raised his life-air to the skull's *brahma-randhra* point, at which time he began amalgamating the various elements within his body into the totality of those elements. This is accomplished by meditating inversely upon the creative process, step by step, up to the point of amalgamating the false ego with *mahat-tattva*. By this method, Maharaja Prithu gave up his material body and then mounted the chariot that had come before him to take him back to Vaikuntha.

Queen Arci had followed her husband in his life of austerity, although her body was very delicate.. She was not at all accustomed to the hardships of forest life, and so because of lying on the bare ground and eating only fruits, flowers and leaves, she became very lean and weak. Still, because of the pleasure that she derived from serving her husband, she did not feel even the slightest difficulty.

When Queen Arci could perceive that her husband's body no longer showed any sign of life, she lamented for only a little while, for she was a great wife of an exalted personality. Without further ado, she built a funeral pyre on top of a hill and then placed her husband's body upon it so that it could be consumed by the blazing fire. Thereafter, Queen Arci executed all of the necessary religious rituals and while bathing in the river, she offered oblations of water, as was customary. Finally, after offering her obeisances unto the

demigods, Queen Arci circumambulated King Prithu's body and then entered the funeral fire while thinking of her husband's lotus feet.

After observing this brave act, thousands of demigods and their wives who were seated on top of Mount Mandara showed flowers upon the funeral pyre as a token of honor. With great satisfaction the wives of demigods glorified Queen Arci by talking among themselves as follows: "All glories to the wife of King Prithu, for she always served Lord Vishnu. Just see how the chaste Queen Arci is still following her husband upwards, as far as we can see. Although the lifespan of human beings is very short, they can easily go back to Godhead by engaging in the devotional service of the Lord. Therefore, anyone who has attained the rare human birth and yet misuses the opportunity by laboring hard in performing fruitive activities must be considered as cheated and envious of his own self."

While the wives of the demigods were talking among themselves in this way, the airplane carrying Queen Arci reached the Vaikuntha planet that her husband had attained. Anyone who reads, hears or describes the wonderful characteristics of Maharaja Prithu with faith and determination will also go to Vaikuntha. Anyone who hears this narration with great respect will become the father of many children if he is without any, and the richest of men if he has no money.

"Whoever hears this narration three times will become very reputed within society, and even if he is illiterate, he will become a great scholar. In other words, hearing about Maharaja Prithu is so auspicious that it drives away all kinds of bad luck. Even if a pure devotee is situated in the transcendental position due to being completely absorbed in Krishna consciousness, it is his duty to hear and induce others to hear about the character and life of King Prithu. Whoever regularly reads this great history will certainly increase his faith and attraction for the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, which are the boat whereby one can cross over the ocean of nescience."

— Adapted from the book "*Śrīmad Bhagavatam in condensed form*" by Purnaprajna das. ❧

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KILLING OF THE DEMONS SHAKATASURA AND TRNAVARTA

Conversation Between

Sukadeva Goswami and Maharaja Parikshit

King Parikshit said: My lord Sukadeva Goswami, all the various activities exhibited by the incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are certainly pleasing to the ear and to the mind. Simply by one's hearing of these activities, the dirty things in one's mind immediately vanish. Generally we are reluctant to hear about the activities of the Lord, but Krishna's childhood activities are so attractive that they are automatically pleasing to the mind and ear. Thus one's attachment for hearing about material things, which is the root cause of material existence, vanishes, and one gradually develops devotional service to the Supreme Lord, attachment for Him, and friendship with devotees who give us the contribution of Krishna consciousness. If you think it fit, kindly speak about those activities of the Lord. Please describe other pastimes of Krishna, the Supreme Personality, who appeared on this planet earth, imitating a human child and performing wonderful activities like killing Putana.

Sukadeva Goswami said: When mother Yashoda's baby was slanting His body to attempt to rise and turn around, this attempt was observed by a Vedic ceremony. In such a ceremony, called *utthāna*, which is performed when a child is due to leave the house for the first time, the child is properly bathed. Just after Krishna turned three months old, mother Yashoda celebrated this ceremony with other women of the neighborhood. On that day, there was a conjunction of the moon with the constellation Rohini. As the *brāhmaṇas* joined by chanting Vedic hymns and professional musicians also took part, this great ceremony was observed by mother Yashoda. After completing the bathing ceremony for the child, mother Yashoda received the *brāhmaṇas* by worshiping them with proper respect and giving them ample food grains and other eatables, clothing, desirable cows, and garlands. The *brāhmaṇas* properly chanted Vedic hymns to observe the auspicious ceremony, and when they finished and mother Yashoda saw that the child felt sleepy, she lay down on the bed with the child until He was peacefully asleep. The liberal mother Yashoda, absorbed in celebrating the *utthāna* ceremony, was busy receiving guests, worshiping them with all respect and offering them clothing, cows, garlands and grains. Thus she could not hear the child crying for His mother.

At that time, the child Krishna, demanding to drink the milk of His mother's breast, angrily threw His legs upward. Lord Sri Krishna was lying down underneath the handcart in one corner of the courtyard, and



Artist: Baradraja Dasa, Muralidhara Dasa, Jadurani Dasi

although His little legs were as soft as leaves, when He struck the cart with His legs, it turned over violently and collapsed. The wheels separated from the axle, the hubs and spokes fell apart, and the pole of the handcart broke. On the cart there were many little utensils made of various metals, and all of them scattered hither and thither. When mother Yashoda and the other ladies who had assembled for the *utthāna* festival, and all the men, headed by Nanda Maharaja, saw the wonderful situation, they began to wonder how the handcart had collapsed by itself. They began to wander here and there, trying to find the cause, but were unable to do so. The assembled cowherd men and ladies began to contemplate how this thing had happened. "Is it the work of some demon or evil planet?" they asked. At that time, the small children present asserted that the cart had been kicked apart by the baby Krishna. As soon as the crying baby had kicked the cart's wheel, the cart had collapsed. There was no doubt about it. The assembled gopis and gopas, unaware that Krishna is always unlimited, could not believe that baby Krishna had such inconceivable power. They could not believe the statements of the children, and therefore they neglected these statements as being childish talk.

Thinking that some bad planet had attacked Krishna, mother Yashoda picked up the crying child and allowed Him to suck her breast. Then she called for experienced *brāhmaṇas* to chant Vedic hymns and perform an auspicious ritualistic ceremony. After the strong, stout cowherd men assembled the pots and paraphernalia on the handcart and set it up as before, the *brāhmaṇas* performed a ritualistic ceremony with a fire sacrifice to appease the bad planet, and then, with rice grains, *kuśa*, water and curd, they worshiped

the Supreme Lord. When *brāhmaṇas* are free from envy, untruthfulness, unnecessary pride, grudges, disturbance by the opulence of others, and false prestige, their blessings never go in vain. Considering this, Nanda Maharaja soberly took Krishna on his lap and invited such truthful *brāhmaṇas* to perform a ritualistic ceremony according to the holy hymns of the *Sāma Veda*, *Rg Veda* and *Yajur Veda*. Then, while the hymns were being chanted, he bathed the child with water mixed with pure herbs, and after performing a fire ceremony, he sumptuously fed all the *brāhmaṇas* with first-class grains and other food. Nanda Maharaja, for the sake of the affluence of his own son Krishna, gave the *brāhmaṇas* cows fully decorated with garments, flower garlands and gold necklaces. These cows, fully qualified to give ample milk, were given to the *brāhmaṇas* in charity, and the *brāhmaṇas* accepted them and bestowed blessings upon the whole family, and especially upon Krishna. The *brāhmaṇas*, who were completely expert in chanting the Vedic hymns, were all *yogīs* fully equipped with mystic powers. Whatever blessings they spoke were certainly never fruitless.

One day, a year after Krishna's appearance, mother Yashoda was patting her son on her lap. But suddenly she felt the child to be heavier than a mountain peak, and she could no longer bear His weight. Feeling the child to be as heavy as the entire universe and therefore being anxious, thinking that perhaps the child was being attacked by some other ghost or demon, the astonished mother Yashoda put the child down on the ground and began to think of Narayana. Foreseeing disturbances, she called for the *brāhmaṇas* to counteract this heaviness, and then she engaged in her other household affairs. She had no alternative than to remember the lotus feet of Narayana, for she could not understand that Krishna was the original source of everything.

While the child was sitting on the ground, a demon named Tṇavarta, who was a servant of Kamsa's, came there as a whirlwind, at Kamsa's instigation, and very easily carried the child away into the air. Covering the whole land of Gokula with particles of dust, that demon, acting as a strong whirlwind, covered everyone's vision and began vibrating everywhere with a greatly fearful sound. For a moment, the whole pasturing ground was overcast with dense darkness from the dust storm, and mother Yashoda was unable to find her son where she had placed Him. Because of the bits of sand thrown about by Tṇavarta, people could not see themselves or anyone else, and thus they were illusioned and disturbed. Because of the dust storm stirred up by the strong whirlwind, mother Yashoda could find no trace of her son, nor could she understand why. Thus she fell down on the ground like a cow who has lost her calf and began to lament very pitifully.



Artist: Muralidhara Dasa

When the force of the dust storm and the winds subsided, Yashoda's friends, the other gopis, approached mother Yashoda, hearing her pitiful crying. Not seeing Krishna present, they too felt very much aggrieved and joined mother Yashoda in crying, their eyes full of tears.

Having assumed the form of a forceful whirlwind, the demon Tṇavarta took Krishna very high in the sky, but when Krishna became heavier than the demon, the demon had to stop his force and could go no further.

Because of Krishna's weight, Tṇavarta considered Him to be like a great mountain or a hunk of iron. But because Krishna had caught the demon's neck, the demon was unable to throw Him off. He therefore thought of the child as wonderful, since he could neither bear the child nor cast aside the burden. With Krishna grasping him by the throat, Tṇavarta choked, unable to make even a sound or even to move his hands and legs. His eyes popping out, the demon lost his life and fell, along with the little boy, down to the ground of Vraja. While the gopis who had gathered were crying for Krishna, the demon fell from the sky onto a big slab of stone, his limbs dislocated, as if he had been pierced by the arrow of Lord Shiva like Tripurasura. The gopis immediately picked Krishna up from the chest of the demon and delivered Him, free from all inauspiciousness, to mother Yashoda. Because the child, although taken into the sky by the demon, was unhurt and now free from all danger and misfortune, the gopis and cowherd men, headed by Nanda Maharaja, were extremely happy. It is most astonishing that although this innocent child was taken away by the *rākṣasa* to be eaten, He has returned without having been killed or even injured. Because this demon was envious, cruel and sinful, he has been killed for his own sinful activities. This is the law of nature. An innocent devotee is always protected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and a sinful person is always vanquished for his sinful life.

Nanda Maharaja and the others said: We must previously have performed austerities for a very long

time, worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, performed pious activities for public life, constructing public roads and wells, and also given charity, as a result of which this boy, although faced with death, has returned to give happiness to His relatives. Having seen all these incidents in Brhadvana, Nanda Maharaja became more and more astonished, and he remembered the words spoken to him by Vasudeva in Mathura.

One day, mother Yashoda, having taken Krishna up and placed Him on her lap, was feeding Him milk from her breast with maternal affection. The milk was flowing from her breast, and the child was drinking it. O King Parikshit, when the child Krishna was almost finished drinking His mother's milk and mother Yashoda was touching Him and looking at His beautiful, brilliantly smiling face, the baby yawned, and mother Yashoda saw in His mouth the whole sky, the higher planetary system and the earth, the luminaries in all directions, the sun, the moon, fire, air, the seas, islands, mountains, rivers, forests, and all kinds of living entities, moving and nonmoving. When mother Yashoda saw the whole universe within the mouth of her child, her heart began to throb, and in astonishment she wanted to close her restless eyes.

— Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » SB 10.7: The Killing of the Demon Tṛnavarta verse: 1-37. ॐ

DESTROYING SHAKATASURA AND TRNAVARTA WITHIN Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakur

*ādau duṣṭa-guru-prāptiḥ pūtanā stanya-dāyini
vātyā-rūpa-kutarkas tu tṛṇāvarta itūritaḥ*



Artists: Jadurani Dasi

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

Persons who are on the path of attachment should avoid the first obstacle, accepting a bogus guru, by discussing Putana's arrival in Vraja in the guise of a nurse. The second obstacle is false arguments. It is difficult for one's ecstatic emotion to be awakened until Tṛnavarta, in the form of a whirlwind, is killed in Vraja. In the form of Tṛnavarta, the arguments of philosophers, Buddhists, and logicians are all obstacles to the ecstatic emotion of Vraja.

*tṛtīye bhāra-vāhitvaṁ śakaṭaṁ buddhi mardakam
caturthe bāla-doṣāṇāṁ svarūpo vatsa-rūpa-dhṛk*

Those who do not understand the purpose of the regulative principles but simply carry the burden of following them out of formality, are unable to develop attachment to Krishnachandra. When one destroys śakaṭa, who personifies carrying the burden of the regulative principles, the third obstacle is overcome. Bogus gurus who did not consider their disciples' qualification for the path of attachment and thus instructed many śakaṭa-like people to accept service in the mood of *mañjarīs* and *sakhīs* committed offenses in the form of disrespecting confidential subject matters and fell down. Those who worship according to such instructions also gradually fall away from spiritual life, because they do not attain the symptoms of deep attachment for those topics. Yet they may still be delivered by the association of devotees and proper instructions. This is called breaking śakaṭa.

—Taken from Sri Krishna Samhita by Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakur, Chapter Eight Direct and Indirect Considerations on the Moods of Vraja. ॐ

RECOMMENDATION BY MAHARAJA PARIKSHIT His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

As stated in the *Prema-vivarta*:

*kṛṣṇa-bahirmukha haiyā bhoga-vāṣṭhā kare
nikṣaṭa-stha māyā tāre jāpaṭiyā dhare*

Our material existence is *māyā*, or illusion, in which we desire different varieties of material enjoyment and therefore change to different varieties of bodies (*bhṛāmayan sarva-bhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā* [Bg. 18.61]). *Asann api kleśada āsa dehaḥ*: [SB 5.5.4] as long as we have these temporary bodies, they give us many varieties of tribulation—*ādhyātmika*, *ādhibhautika* and *ādhidaiivika*. This is the root cause of all suffering. This root cause can be eradicated by revival of our Krishna consciousness. All the Vedic literatures presented by Vyasadeva and other great sages are therefore intended to revive our Krishna consciousness, which begins to revive with *śravaṇa*-



kīrtanam. Śṛṇvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ (SB 1.2.17). *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other Vedic literatures exist simply to give us a chance to hear about Krishna. Krishna has different *avatāras*, or incarnations, all of which are wonderful and which arouse one's inquisitiveness. Generally, the *avatāras* such as Matsya, Kurma and Varaha are not as attractive as Krishna. However, in the initial stage, we have no attraction even for hearing about Krishna. This is the root cause of our suffering.

Parikshit Maharaja specifically mentions that the wonderful activities of baby Krishna, which amazed Mother Yashoda and the other inhabitants of Vraja, are especially attractive. From the very beginning of His childhood, Krishna performed many wonderful pastimes like killing Putana, Trivarta and Shakatasura. He also showed His mother the entire universe within His mouth. Thus the pastimes of Krishna, one after another, kept Mother Yashoda and all the inhabitants of Vraja in great astonishment.

The process to revive one's Krishna consciousness is *ādaḥ śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅgaḥ* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.4.15). The pastimes of Krishna can be properly received from devotees. If one has developed a little bit of Krishna consciousness by hearing about the activities of Krishna from *vaiṣṇavas*, one will gradually become attached to *vaiṣṇavas* who are interested only in Krishna consciousness. Therefore, Parikshit Maharaja recommends that one hear about Krishna's childhood activities, which are more

attractive than the activities of other incarnations, such as Matsya, Kurma and Varaha.

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » SB 10.7: The Killing of the Demon Trivarta » Verse: 2, Purport.

PRAKATA-LĪLĀ AND APRAKATA-LĪLĀ

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

Lord Krishna's three *dhāma* — Dwarka, Mathura, and Vrindavana differ from each other only according to how much the Lord manifests His *nara-līlā*—His earthly, human pastimes—and to what degree of intensity *mādhurya* is manifest. Lord Krishna's *nara-līlā* is of two varieties: *prakata* (manifest) and *aprakata* (unmanifest). Performing endless pastimes with His intimate associates, Lord Krishna reveals all the varied moods of different human ages — *balya-līlā* (childhood), *pauganda* (boyhood), *kaisora* (puberty), and *vilasa* (mature amorous love). When these eternal pastimes become unmanifest in the material world they are known as *aprakata-līlā*, but when these same pastimes of the Lord and His associates are manifest in the mundane plane they are described as *prakata-līlā*.

Lord Krishna travels between His different dhāmas such as Mathura, Vrindavana, and Dwarka only in His *prakata-līlā*. When the Lord travels we can therefore understand His activities are *prakata-līlā*. Krishna's arrivals and departures from the dhāmas do not occur



in His *aprakata-līlā*. The entire *prakata-līlā* such as His *janma-līlā* (birth) and *mausala-līlā* (the internecine conflict that destroyed Yadu dynasty.) are seen in the innumerable universes in an arranged sequence. In each of these universes exist a Vrindavana, Mathura, and Dwarka visible to the residents of those planets. The Lord's pastimes may be compared to the sun: The sun is seen during the day in a specific place and time every year, while it yet remains invisible in other areas. Similarly, the Supreme Lord, Krishna, while remaining in His own abode, Vrindavana, reveals His original form in His complete pastimes in one particular universe, yet out of His sweet will He shrouds it in other universes.

In *prakata-līlā*, the Lord's boyhood pastimes, for example, are continuous and transcendental, enacted in His original form. But the *mausala-līlā* and the (the pastime of kidnapping the captured queens) are like illusions conjured by magic. We must understand that the reason for exhibiting these two *kṛttim-līlā*, or make believe pastimes, is to hide the truth that His pastimes are eternal. In Krishna's *prakata-līlā* some of His associates, by His own will, do see gem studded Vrindavana dhama in all its sublime splendour, but others, also by His own will, are not given that vision.

It is worth noting that some very advanced devotees are able to directly view the Lord's pastimes even after He has concluded His *prakata-līlā*. This is because of their profound devotional involvement, their intense spiritual eagerness, and the divine favour of the Lord.

In this way, it is established that of all the forms and manifestations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, that of Lord Sri Krishna, son of Nanda

Maharaja, is paramount. Similarly, amongst His many dhama's Gokula Vrindavana, is the topmost. Lord Krishna's superlative excellences of *prema-mādhurya* (divine conjugal love), *līlā-mādhurya* (transcendental pastimes), *venu-mādhurya* (expertise in playing the flute), and *śrī yigraha-mādhurya* (matchless beauty) solely existing in Vrindavana dhāma.

—Śrī Bhāgavatamṛta-Kaṇa, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Translated by Sarvabhāvana dāsa.

ŚRĪ VRAJA-RĀJA-SUTĀṢṬAKAM

Eight Prayers Glorifying the Son of the King of Vraja

*nava-nīrada-nindita-kānti-dharaṁ
rasa-sāgara-nāgara-bhūpa-varam
śubha-vāṅkima-cāru-śikhaṇḍa-śikham
bhaja kṛṣṇa -nidhiṁ vraja-rāja-sutam*

Just worship Sri Krishna, the son of the king of Vraja, who is a treasure-house of priceless jewels! His complexion is more effulgent than a fresh rain cloud; He is the king of paramours, the ocean of *rasa*; His crown is adorned with a lovely peacock feather auspiciously tilted to the left (bowing towards Sri Radha's feet).

*bhru-viśaṅkita-vāṅkima-śakru-dhanuṁ
mukha-candra-vinindita-koṭi-vidhum
mṛdu-manda-suhāsyā-subhāsyā-yutaṁ
bhaja kṛṣṇa -nidhiṁ vraja-rāja-sutam*

Just worship Sri Krishna, the son of the king of Vraja,



who is a treasure-house of priceless jewels! His arched eyebrows belittle the rainbow (the bow of Indra); His pure moonlike face, which dwarfs millions of moons, is adorned with an enchanting soft smile and fine speech.

*suvikampad-anaṅga-sad-aṅga-dharam
vraja-vāsī-manohara-veśa-karam
bhṛṣa-lāschita-nīla-saroja-dṛśam
bhaja kṛṣṇa -nidhiṁ vraja-rāja-sutam*

Just worship Krishna, the dark Jewel, the son of the King of Vraja, whose divine bodily limbs tremble profusely with the transcendental Cupid's agitations, who dresses enchantingly just to fascinate the *vraja-vāsīs* and who is decorated with extraordinary eyes like blue lotus blossoms.

*alakāvali-maṇḍita-bhāla-taṭam
śruti-dolita-mākara-kunḍalakam
kaṭi-veṣṭita-pīta-paṭam sudhaṭam
bhaja kṛṣṇa -nidhiṁ vraja-rāja-sutam*

Just worship Sri Krishna, the son of the king of Vraja, who is a treasure-house of priceless jewels! His forehead is surrounded by curling locks of hair; swaying dolphin (*makara*) - shaped earrings dangle from His ears; His waist is adorned with meticulously arranged yellow silk which embraces His charming hips.

*kala-nūpura-rājita-cāru-padam
maṇi-raṣjita-gaṣjita-bhṛṅga-madam
dhvaja-vajra-jhaṣāṅkita-pāda-yugam
bhaja kṛṣṇa -nidhiṁ vraja-rāja-sutam*

Just worship Sri Krishna, the son of the king of Vraja, who is a treasure-house of priceless jewels! Tinkling anklebells resound on His beautiful feet; He glows with jeweled ornaments; His spirited behavior mocks the intoxication of honey bees; the soles of His feet are marked with a flag, thunderbolt, fish and other charming symbols.

*bhṛṣa-candana-carcita-cāru-tanum
maṇi-kaustubha-garhita-bhānu-tanum
vrāja-bāla-śiromaṇi-rūpa-dhṛtam
bhaja kṛṣṇa -nidhiṁ vraja-rāja-sutam*

Just worship Sri Krishna, the son of the king of Vraja, who is a treasure-house of priceless jewels! His graceful body is generously smeared with sandalwood paste; His glowing Kaustubha gem overshadows the sun; He has appeared as the crown jewel among the young boys of Vraja.

*sura-vṛnda-suvandya-mukunda-hariṁ
sura-nātha-śiromaṇi-sarva-gurum
giridhāri-murāri-purāri-param
bhaja kṛṣṇa -nidhiṁ vraja-rāja-sutam*

Just worship Sri Krishna, the son of the king of Vraja, who is a treasure-house of priceless jewels! He is worshiped by all the demigods and sages as the giver of *mukti* and the Supreme Lord Hari; He is the crest-jewel of all controllers and the guru of all beings; He is the lifter of Giri-Govardhana, the killer of the Mura demon and the master of Lord Shiva.

*vṛṣabhānu-sutā-vara-keli param
rasa-rāja-śiromaṇi-veśa-dharam
jagadīśvaram-īśvaram-īḍya-varam
bhaja kṛṣṇa -nidhiṁ vraja-rāja-sutam*

Just worship Sri Krishna, the son of the king of Vraja, who is a treasure-house of priceless jewels! He is dedicated to amorous escapades with the daughter of Vrishabhānu Maharaja; impeccably dressed as the king of the enjoyers of *rasa*; He is the supreme monarch and the most worshipable Lord of the entire creation.

—An Anonymous Poem in Sanskrit, Translated by Dasharati Suta Das, Edited by Isha Prakash Das. ॐ



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Sri Damodara Lila

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GARGACHARYA VISITS NANDA MAHARAJA *Editorial*

One day, Vasudeva sent for Gargamuni, the family priest of the *yadu-varṇśa*. Thus Gargamuni went to the house of Nanda Maharaja, who received him very well and humbly requested him to give names to Krishna and Balarama. Gargamuni, of course, reminded Nanda Maharaja that King Kamsa was looking for the son of Devaki and advised that if he performed the ceremony very gorgeously, it would certainly come to his notice. Kamsa, would then suspect that Krishna was the son of Devaki. Nanda Maharaja therefore requested Gargamuni to perform this ceremony without anyones knowledge, and thus the name giving ceremony was performed inconspicuously. In giving names to the boys Gargamuni explained that because Balarama, the son of Rohini, increases the transcendental bliss of others, His name should be Rama. Also because of His extraordinary strength, He should be called Baladeva. Similarly, since He attracts the Yadus to follow His instructions, His name is Sankarsana. Krishna, the son of Yashoda, previously appeared in many other forms with different colors, such as white, red and yellow. Now He had now assumed a swarthy (blackish) complexion. Because He was sometimes the son of Vasudeva, His name is Vāsudeva. According to His various activities and qualities, He also has many other names. After thus informing Nanda Maharaja of His son's multifarious virtues, Gargamuni completed the

name-giving ceremony, He advised Nanda Maharaja to protect his son very carefully and then departed.

Sukadeva Goswami further describes how the two children crawled, walked on Their small legs, played with the cows and calves, stole butter and other milk products and broke the butter pots. In this way, he described the many mischievous activities of Krishna and Balarama. The most wonderful of these occurred when Krishnas playmates complained to Mother Yashoda that Krishna was eating earth. Mother Yashoda wanted to open Krishnas mouth to see the evidence so that she could chastise Him. Sometimes she assumed the position of a chastising mother, and at the thugh generally she was overwhelmed with maternal love. After describing all this to Maharaja Pariksit, Sukadeva Goswami, praised the fortune of Mother Yashoda and Nanda Maharaja who were formerly Drona and Dhara, and by the order of Brahma they came to this earth to accept the Supreme Personality of Godhead as their son.

DAMODARA LILA
Srila Sukadeva Goswami

One day when mother Yashoda saw that all the maidservants were engaged in other household affairs, she personally began to churn yogurt to make butter for her Gopal. While churning, she remembered His childish activities, and in her own way she composed songs and enjoyed singing to herself about all those



activities.

Dressed in a saffron-yellow sari, with a belt tied about her full hips, mother Yashoda pulled on the churning rope, laboring considerably. Her bangles and earrings moving and vibrating and her whole body shook. Because of her intense love for her child, her breasts were wet with milk. Her face, with its very beautiful eyebrows, was also wet with perspiration, and malati flowers were falling from her hair.

While mother Yashoda was churning the yoghurt, Lord Krishna, desiring to drink milk, approached her. In order to increase her transcendental pleasure, He caught hold of the churning rod and thus prevented her from churning. Mother Yashoda in response embraced Krishna, allowed Him to sit on her lap, and began to look upon the face of the Lord with great love and affection. Because of her intense affection, milk was flowing from her breast. At that time however, she saw that the milk on the stove was boiling over. Hastily she immediately left her son to take care of that even though the child was not yet fully satisfied with His drinking milk. Being very angry and biting His reddish lips with His teeth, Krishna, with false tears in His eyes, broke the container of yogurt with a piece of stone. Then He entered a room and began to eat the freshly churned butter in a solitary place.

Mother Yashoda, after taking the hot milk from the stove, returned to the churning pot. When she saw that the container of yogurt was broken and that Krishna was not present, she concluded that the breaking of the pot was the work of her naughty son. Krishna, at that time, was sitting on an inverted pounding mortar and was giving milk preparations such as yogurt and butter to the monkeys in a carefree manner. Being aware of His wrong doing Krishna was repeatedly looking over His shoulder anxiously, suspecting that He may well be chastised by His mother. Mother Yashoda, upon seeing Her naughty son, very stealthily approached Him from behind. When Lord Sri Krishna saw His mother, stick in hand, He very quickly got down from mortar and began to flee as if very much afraid. Although *yogīs*, desiring to enter into His effulgence try to capture Krishna in His form as Paramatma by meditation, great austerities and penances, they fail to reach Him. Still mother Yashoda, thinking that same Personality of Godhead, Krishna, to be her son, began chasing Him. However mother Yashoda, her thin waist overburdened by her heavy breasts, could not run very sprightly. Due to chasing Krishna, her braids became loose, and the flowers in her hair fell to the ground. Yet she still managed to capture her son, Krishna. When caught by mother Yashoda, Krishna became more and more afraid and admitted to being an offender. As she held Him, she saw that He was crying and His tears mixed with the black ointment around His eyes. He rubbed His eyes with His hands and thus smeared the

ointment all over His face. Mother Yashoda, catching her beautiful son by the hand, began to mildly chastise Him.

Mother Yashoda was always overwhelmed by intense love for Krishna, not knowing who Krishna really was or how powerful He actually was. Because of maternal affection for Krishna, she never even cared to know these things. When she saw that her son had become excessively afraid, she threw the stick away and thought to bind Him so that He would not commit any further mischief.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead has no beginning and no end, no exterior and no interior, no front and no rear. In other words, He is all-pervading. Because He is not under the influence of the element of time, for Him there is no difference between past, present and future; He exists in His own transcendental form at all times. Being absolute, beyond relativity, He is free from distinctions between cause and effect, although He is the cause and effect of everything. That unmanifested person, who is beyond the perception of the senses, had now appeared as a human child, and mother Yashoda, considering Him her own ordinary child, bound Him to the wooden mortar with a rope.

When mother Yashoda was trying to bind the offending child, she saw that the binding rope was short by a distance the width of two thumbs. Thus she brought another rope to join to it. This new rope





also was short by a measurement of two thumbs, and when another rope was joined to it, it was still similarly short. As many ropes as she joined, all of them failed; their shortness could not be overcome. Thus mother Yashoda joined whatever ropes were available in the household, but still she failed in her attempt to bind Krishna. Mother Yashoda's friends, the elderly gopis in the neighborhood, were smiling and enjoying the fun. Similarly, mother Yashoda, although laboring in that way, was also smiling. All of them were struck with wonder. Due to her strenuous efforts, mother Yashoda's whole body became covered with perspiration, and the flowers and comb fell from her hair. When child Krishna saw His mother thus fatigued, He became merciful and agreed to be bound by her. O Maharaja Pariksit, this entire universe, with its great, exalted demigods like Lord Shiva, Lord Brahma and Lord Indra, is under the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Yet the Supreme Lord has one transcendental attribute: He comes under the control of His devotees. This was now exhibited by Krishna in this pastime.

Neither Lord Brahma, nor Lord Shiva, nor even the goddess of fortune, who is always the better half of the Supreme Lord, can obtain from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the deliverer from this material world, such mercy as received by mother Yashoda. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, the son of mother

Yashoda, is accessible to devotees engaged in spontaneous loving service, but He is not accessible to mental speculators, to those striving for self-realization by severe austerities and penances, or to

those who consider the body the same as the self.

— *Srimad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summit Bonum » SB 10.9: Mother Yashoda Binds Lord Krishna. » Verses: 1-21.*

THE POSITION OF A PURE DEVOTEE His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

From these dealings between Mother Yashoda and Krishna, we can understand the exalted position of a pure devotee in loving service to the Lord. *Yogīs, jñānīs, karmīs* and vedantists cannot even approach Krishna; they must remain very, very far away from Him and try to enter His bodily effulgence, although this also they are unable to do. Great demigods like Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva always worship the Lord by meditation and by service. Even the most powerful Yamaraja fears Krishna. Therefore, as we find in the history of Ajamila, Yamaraja instructed his followers not even to approach the devotees, what to speak of capturing them. In other words, Yamaraja also fears Krishna and Krishna's devotees. Yet this Krishna became so dependent on Mother Yashoda that when she simply showed Krishna the stick in her hand, Krishna admitted to being an offender and began to cry like an ordinary child. Mother Yashoda, of course, did not want to chastise her beloved child very much, and therefore she immediately threw her stick away and simply rebuked Krishna, saying, "Now I shall bind You so that You cannot commit any further offensive activities. Nor for the time being can You play with Your playmates."



Mother Yashoda wanted to bind Krishna not in order to chastise Him but because she thought that the child was so restless that He might leave the house in fear. That would be another disturbance. Therefore, because of full affection, to stop Krishna from leaving the house, she wanted to bind Him with rope. Mother Yashoda wanted to impress upon Krishna that since He was afraid merely to see her stick, He should not perform such disturbing activities as breaking the container of yogurt and butter and distributing its contents to the monkeys. Mother Yashoda did not care to understand who Krishna was and how His power spreads everywhere. This is an example of pure love for Krishna. This shows the position of a pure devotee, in contrast with others, like *jñānīs*, *yogīs* and the followers of Vedic ritualistic ceremonies, in regarding the transcendental nature of the Absolute Truth.

— *Srimad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » SB 10.9: Mother Yashoda Binds Lord Krishna. » Verses: 11 & 12, Purport.* ❀

THE DISTANCE OF TWO SHORT FINGERS

Srila Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura

With the ropes of her intense *prema*, Yashoda tied up Krishna, the all-pervading Lord who binds up everyone from Brahma to the blade of grass with the modes of material nature. Limited objects can be bound by surrounding them on the outside. But where can one tie the rope on He who is greater than the greatest, and who has no inside or outside? Krishna pervades all space and time as well. Krishna cannot be limited by past, present and future. The unlimited can bind the limited, but in this case it was the opposite. The entire universe, which is created by His power, cannot bind Krishna, then what to speak of an insignificant rope within that universe? One cannot say that a little boy cannot bind up the universe, because Yashoda saw the entire cosmic manifestation within that little boy Krishna's mouth. How then could Yashoda bind Him?

The answer is given: Krishna was bound by the uncommon motherly love of Yashoda who thought of Him as her son. Though Krishna is all powerful, by His inconceivable energy He allows Himself to be controlled by love and bound by His beloveds. Krishna is called *avyaktam* (unmanifested) because under the control of love He conceals His powers and appears like a human being, *martya-līngam*, even though He is beyond material sense perception, *adhokṣajam*. The power of Yashoda's love bound up the Lord, who is the aggregate of all consciousness, just as one binds an ordinary child *prākṛtam*.

Krishna was thinking, "I cannot be bound up because I must do my daily duties of stealing yogurt and playing with My friends." Krishna's *vibhūti-śakti* (the power to show or reveal His opulence) inspired by His *satya*

saṅkalpa-śakti (the power to fulfill each and every desire of the Lord) suddenly entered into His body at that time. Thus, the rope remained two fingers too short no matter how many ropes Yashoda tied together.

All the elderly gopis in the neighborhood were laughing (*gopīnām susmayantīnām*). In her astonishment (*vismitā*), Yashoda thought: "A rope of one hundred *hastas* (150 feet) does not fit around my son's waist which measures only one fist width. His small waist is not getting any bigger, and the rope is certainly not getting any shorter. But still the rope does not reach around Him. This is the first amazing thing. Furthermore, when I tie the ropes together, each time it is two fingers short, not three or four fingers. That is the second amazing thing."

The onlooking older gopis advised Mother Yashoda: "As you cannot bind Krishna even with all the ropes in the house, then it must be concluded that it is His good fortune that it should not be tied. Listen Yashoda, give up this attempt!"

Still, Yashoda was determined: "Even if evening comes and I tie together all the ropes in the whole village, I must find out just once the extent of My son's waist."

Yashoda wanted to teach a lesson to her son. Due to her persistence, she would not give up her attempt to bind the Lord. In the competition between Krishna and His devotee, the devotee's determination always prevails. Thus, seeing His mother's fatigue, Lord Krishna gave up His own persistence, became merciful and allowed Himself to be tied.

Krishna's mercy, which reigns as the king of all His potencies and illuminates all others, melts the heart of the Lord like butter. The appearance of Krishna's mercy made His *satya saṅkalpa* and *vibhūti śaktis* immediately disappear. The distance of two fingers was filled by the devotee's effort and hard work (*parīśramam*) and the Lord's causeless mercy. The *bhakta-niṣṭhā* (firm faith of the devotee) seen in his tireless endeavors to serve and worship the Lord, and the *sva-niṣṭhā* (the natural inborn quality) of the Lord, which brings forth His mercy upon seeing the devotee's effort and fatigue caused Krishna to be bound. In the absence of these two, the rope will remain two fingers too short. But when *bhakta-niṣṭhā* and *sva-niṣṭhā* are present the Lord can be bound. In this pastime, Krishna showed Yashoda and the whole world that only love can bind the Supreme Lord.

— *From Sārārtha-darśinī commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam by Srila Vishvanātha Chakravartī Thakura » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 9: Mother Yaśodā Binds Lord Kṛṣṇa » Verses: 18, 19 & 20 » Translated by His Holiness Bhanu Swami.* ❀





THE MAGNIFICENCE OF VĀTSALYA-RASA Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura

One day, after relishing *khicurī prasādam*, Vijaya-kumara and Vrajanatha went to pay their respects at the *samādhi* of Srila Haridasa Thakura. Thereafter, they proceeded for the auspicious *darśana* of Sri Tota Gopinatha, who resides resplendently in the garden-like area in south Jagannatha Puri known as Tota. Finally, they arrived at the Sri Sri Radhakanta temple. After offering prostrated obeisances at Srila Gopala-guru Goswami's feet, they sat down. However, soon Srila Gopala-guru Goswami went away to take *prasādam*, so the two seekers of *rasa-tattva* discussed various Krishna-conscious topics with Sri Dhyana-candra Goswami. Upon his return, Srila Goswami sat upon his *āsana* and Vrajanatha felt inspired to humbly enquire about the details of *vātsalya-rasa*, parental mellow.

Srila Goswami started his elucidation, "In *vātsalya-rasa*, Sri Krishna is the *viśaya-ālambana*, principal objective, and His *guru-jana*, superior and elder *vrajavāsīs*, are the *āśrayā-ālambana*, principal shelter. Krishna is the epitome of beauty, dark complexioned, the reservoir of all auspiciousness, tender and gentle, sweet in speech, guileless, bashful, humble, charitable, and respectful to His elders. Krishna's superiors are Vrajeshvari Yashoda Devi, Vrajeshvara Nanda Maharaja, Rohini Devi, the senior gopis, Devaki Devi, Kunti Devi, Sri Vasudeva, Sandipani Muni, and so on. Yashoda devi and Nanda Maharaja are principal amongst the seniors. The *uddīpanas* in *vātsalya-rasa* are the different ages of Krishna as a child, His beauty, His clothing as a child, His behaviour as a child, His restlessness, His sweet words and talks as a baby, His joyful chuckling laughter, and His sometimes mischievous pastimes, etc."

Vrajanatha, "What are the different *anubhāvas* of this *rasa*?"

Goswami, "Smelling the top of Krishna's head, gently squeezing and stroking His body, blessing Him, pampering Him, protecting and maintaining Him, offering Him good advice, are some of the *anubhāvas*. The *sādhāraṇa*, general, *anubhāvas* in this *rasa* are kissing, embracing, loudly calling Krishna by His pet names, and restraining and chastising Him at appropriate moments."

Vrajanatha, "What are the *sattvika-vikāras* in this *rasa*?"

Goswami, "The eight regular transformations such as becoming stunned, ecstatic trembling, tears of ecstasy, etc., are present, plus, unique to this *rasa*, the outflow of breast-milk from the elder ladies. Thus, there are nine *sattvika-vikāras*."

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

Vrajanatha, "What are the *vyabhicārī-bhāvas* of *vātsalya-rasa*?"

Goswami, "All the *vyabhicārī-bhāva* symptoms of *prīta-rasa* (*dāsyā-rasa*) like: "Harṣa, smiling; *garva*, pride; *dhṛti*, patience; *nirveda*, remorse; *viśada*, dejection; *dainya*, humility; *cintā*, anxiety; *smṛti*, remembering; *śaṅkā*, doubt; *matī*, understanding; *autsukya*, eagerness; *cāpalya*, restlessness; *vitarka*, argumentation; *āvega*, trepidation; *hrī*, shame; *vṛīḍa*, bashfulness; *jāḍya*, inertia; *moha*, delusion; *unmāda*, madness; *avahitthā*, hiding emotions; *bodha*, perceptiveness; *svapna*, sleep; *supti*, state of dreaming; *klama*, fatigue; *glāni*, a feeling that one is in a faulty position; *vyādhi*, sickness; and *mṛti*, yearning for death, plus *mūrchā*, swoon, are manifest in *vātsalya-rasa*."

Vrajanatha, "What is the nature of the *sthāyi-bhāva* in this *rasa*?"

Goswami, "In this *rasa*, the *sthāyi-bhāva* is benevolent love and kindness, completely devoid of awe and reverence, given to the recipient of mercy. The *vātsalya-rati* of elders such as Yashoda devi is mature and matronly by nature. In this *rasa*, the *sthāyi-bhāva* extends through *prema* and *sneha* to reach *rāga*.

"Balarama's love for Krishna is a mixture of *dāsyā-rasa* and *vātsalya-rasa*. Yudhisthira's *rasa* is infused with *vātsalya*, *dāsyā*, and *sakhyā-rasa*. Ugrasena's *dāsyā-rasa* is combined with *vātsalya* and *sakhyā-rasa*. Nakula, Sahadeva, and Narada exhibit a combination of *sakhyā* and *dāsyā-rasa*. The *bhāvas* of Lord Shiva, Garuda, Uddhava and many others also exhibit an amalgamation of *dāsyā* and *sakhyā-rasa*."

—Jaiva Dharma, Part Three: The Rasas of Vātsalya and Mādhurya, Chapter Thirty Further Consideration of Rasa-tattva Translated by Sarvabhāvana dāsa. ॐ

HOW CAN WE ATTAIN KRISHNA'S SERVICE?

Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura

Sri Krishnacandra, Lord of Vrindavana, is the eternal son of Nanda and Yashoda, who are eternally perfect residents of Vraja. He is no one else's son. Nanda and Yashoda rendered unlimited amounts of service, and therefore they were given the gift of having the Supreme Personality of Godhead as their son. This Shyamasundara, who is Yashoda's son, is our worshipable Lord. In the *śloka* beginning *ārādhya bhagavān vrajeśa tanaya*, Devaki's son has not been described as the worshipable Lord but the son of Yashoda. Vasudeva and Devaki were not as qualified as Nanda and Yashoda in terms of their service.

Worship of Nandanandana is the highest of all. Better than that, however, is the worship of Nanda, who by his service pleases Krishna so much. If we receive Nanda's mercy, we will certainly receive the



blessings to serve his beloved son. *nanda-nandana* lives in Vrindavana, and He also resides in the pure soul's heart, which is compared to Vrindavana. Unless our heart is completely purified by serving the guru, Nanda, we will not be able to find the Lord in our heart.

The residents of Vraja want Krishna simply so they can serve Him. They are extremely anxious to see Him. Their happiness lies only in making Krishna happy. They do not trade favors with Krishna but are selfless and devoid of the desire for personal happiness. They have natural attraction for Him. If we can follow in their footsteps, we will attain the good fortune of attaining Krishna's service.

—*Amṛta Vāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, Compiled by Śrīpāda Bhakti Mayukha Bhāgavat Mahārāja, Adapted and Published by Īśvara dāsa,*

Translated from Bengali by Bhūmipatī dāsa, by Īśvara dāsa, Translated from Bengali by Bhūmipatī dāsa

GLORIES OF THE SON OF MOTHER YASHODA Sṛila Rupa Goswami

*atrāsīt kila nanda-sadma śakaṭasyātrābhavad bhañjanam
bandha-ccheda-karo 'pidāmbhirabhūdbaddho 'radāmodarah
itthaṁ māthura-vṛddha- vaktra-vigalat- pīyūṣa-dhārām pibann
ānandāṣru-dharaḥ kadā madhu-purīm dhanyaś carīṣyāmy aham*

When will I become fortunate to visit Mathura Puri and shed tears of bliss as I drink from the stream of nectarean words flowing from the mouths of the old guides there who say, "Here was Nanda Maharaja's



home. Here the cart was broken. Here Lord Damodara, who breaks the bonds of birth and death for His devotees, was Himself tied up with ropes by Mother Yashoda?"

—Śrī Kaviśekhara

*nītaṁ nava-navanītaṁ kiyad iti kṣṇo yaśodayā prātaḥ
iyad iti guru-jana- savidhe vidhṛta-dhaniṣṭhā- payodharaḥ pāyāt*

Mother Yashoda asked child Krishna: "How much butter did You take?" In the presence of all the grown-ups child Krishna grasped Dhanistha's breast and said: "This much." May that child Krishna protect us all.

—Śrī Sāraṅga

*śambho svāgataṁ āsyatām ita ito vāmena padmodbhava
krauñcāre kuśalaṁ sukhaṁ sura-pate vittaśa no dṛśyase
itthaṁ svapna-gatasya kaiṭabha-ripoḥ śrutvā jananyā girāḥ
kim kim bālaka jalpasīty anucitaṁ thūthū-kṛtaṁ pātu vah*

Hearing sleeping Krishna say, "Shiva, welcome! Sit down. Brahma, you sit at my left. Karttikeya! Auspiciousness to you. Indra! Happiness to you. Kuvera! I did not see you." Mother Yashoda said: "Child! What, what nonsense are You saying?" I pray these words of Mother Yashoda will protect you all.

—Śrī Mayūra

*vatsa sthāvara-kandareṣu vicaran dūra-pracāre gavāṁ
himsrān vikṣya puraḥ purāṇa-puruṣaṁ nārāyaṇaṁ dhyāsyasi
ity uktasya yaśodayā mura-ripor vavyāj jaganti sphuraḍ-
bimboṣṭha-dvaya-gāḍha-pīḍana-vaśād avyakta-bhāvaṁ smitam*

Mother Yashoda said, "Child, when You take care of the cows far away in the forests or the caves of Govardhana Hill and You see dangerous wild animals, You should meditate on the ancient Supreme Person, Lord Narayana, and He will protect You." As Lord Krishna heard these words, it was only with great difficulty that He prevented a smile from appearing on His bimba-fruit lips. May that suppressed smile protect all the worlds.

—Śrī Abhinanda

*śyāmoccandra svapiṣi na śiṣo naiti mām adya nidrā
nidrā-hetoḥ śṛṇu suta kathāṁ kām apūrvāṁ kuruṣva
vyaktaḥ stambhān naraharir abhūd dānavāṁ dārayiṣyann
ity uktasya smitam udayate devakī-nandanasya*

"O my rising dark moon, my child, Are You not asleep?"

"No Mother. Sleep has not yet come to Me."

"Listen, my son. I will tell You a bedtime story that will

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make You fall asleep."

"What is this story I have never heard? Please tell it."

Mother Yashoda then told the story. When she came to the sentences, "Then Lord Narsimha appeared from the pillar and was very eager to rip the demon to shreds," a smile suddenly arose on child Krishna's lips.

—Śrī Sarvānanda

*mukta-munīnāṁ mṛgyaṁ kim api phalaṁ devakī phalati
tat pālayati yaśoda nikāmaṁ upabhuñjate gopyaḥ*

Devakī bore a precious fruit sought by the libeared sages, Yashoda protected that fruit, and now the gopis taste that fruit to their hearts content.

—Śrī Dakṣiṇātya

*tāmbūlaṁ sva-mukhārdha- carcitaṁ itaḥ ko me mukhe nikṣipet
unmarga-prasṛtaṁ ca cāṭu-vacanaḥ ko mām vaśe sthāpayet
ehy ehīti vidūra-sārīta- bhujāḥ svāṅke nidhāyādhunā
keli-srasta- śikhaṇḍakaṁ mama punar vyādhūya badhnātu kaḥ*

Thinking of Mother Yashoda from Mathura Sri Krishna said: Now who will take half-chewed betelnuts from her own mouth and place them in Mine? Now who will subdue Me with sweet words when I depart from the path of righteousness? Now who will call: Come! Come!; wave her arm, and place Me on his lap? Now who will re-tie My peacock- feather when it falls because of My pastimes?

—Śrī Tairabhukta Kavi

—Taken from Śrī Padyāvalī of Srila Rupa Goswami, Translated by Kuśakratha dāsa



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DELIVERANCE OF NALAKUVERA AND MANIGRIVA
Conversation between
Sukadeva Goswami and Maharaja Parikshita

King Parikṣita inquired from Sukadeva Goswami: O great and powerful saint, what was the cause of Nalakuvara's and Manigriva's having been cursed by Narada Muni? What did they do that was so abominable that even Narada, the great sage, became angry at them? Kindly describe this to me.

Sukadeva Goswami said: O King Parikṣita, because the two sons of Kuvera had been elevated to the association of Lord Shiva, of which they were very much proud, they were allowed to wander in a garden attached to Kailasa Hill, on the bank of the Mandakini River. Taking advantage of this, they used to drink a kind of liquor called *vāruṇī*. Accompanied by women singing to them, they would wander in that flower garden, their eyes always rolling in intoxication.

Within the water of the Mandakini Ganges, which teemed with lotus flowers, the two sons of Kuvera would sport with young girls, just like two male elephants sporting in the water with female elephants.

O Maharaja Parikṣit, by some chance auspicious opportunity for the two boys, the great saint *Devarṣi* Narada once appeared there. Seeing them intoxicated, with rolling eyes, he could understand everything. Upon seeing Narada, the naked demigod girls were very much ashamed. Afraid of being cursed, they hastily covered themselves with their garments. But the two sons of Kuvera did not do so; instead, not caring about Narada, they remained naked. Seeing the two sons of the demigods naked and intoxicated by opulence and false prestige, *Devarṣi* Narada, in order to show them special mercy, desired to give them a special curse. Thus he spoke as follows.

Narada Muni said: Among all the attractions of material enjoyment, the attraction of riches bewilders one's intelligence more than having beautiful bodily features, taking birth in an aristocratic family, and being learned. When one is uneducated but falsely puffed up by wealth, the result is that one engages his wealth in enjoying wine, women and gambling. Unable to control their senses, rascals who are falsely proud of their riches or their birth in aristocratic families are so cruel that to maintain their perishable bodies, which they think will never grow old or die, they kill poor animals without mercy. Sometimes they kill animals merely to enjoy an excursion. While living one may be proud of one's body, thinking oneself a very big man, minister, president or even demigod, but whatever one may be, after death this body will turn either into worms, into stool or into ashes. If one kills poor animals to satisfy the temporary whims of this body, obviously he does not know that he will suffer in his next birth. Such a sinful miscreant must go to



hell and suffer the results of his actions. While alive, does this body belong to its employer, to the self, to the father, the mother, or the mother's father? Does it belong to the person who takes it away by force, to the slave master who purchases it, or to the sons who burn it in the fire? Or, if the body is not burned, does it belong to the dogs that eat it? Among the many possible owners, who is the rightful claimant? To not properly ascertain this but instead to maintain the body by sinful activities is not at all good. This body, after all, is produced by the un-manifested nature and at death, it is again annihilated and merged in the natural elements. Therefore, it is the common property of everyone. Under the circumstances, who but a rascal claims this property as his own and while maintaining it commits such sinful activities as killing animals just to satisfy his whims? Unless one is a complete rascal, he cannot commit such sinful activities. Atheistic fools and rascals who are very much proud of their wealth fail to see things as they are. Therefore, returning them to poverty is the proper ointment for their eyes so they may see things as they are. At least a poverty-stricken man can realize how painful poverty is, and therefore he will not want others to be in a painful condition like his own. By seeing their faces, one who has been pricked by pins can understand the pain of others who are pin pricked. Realizing that this pain is the same for everyone, he does not want others to suffer in this way. But one who has never been pricked by pins cannot realise this. A poverty-stricken man must automatically undergo austerities and penances because he does not have the wealth to possess anything of substance. Thus his false prestige is vanquished. Always in need of food, shelter and clothing, he must be satisfied with what is obtained by the mercy of providence. Undergoing such compulsory austerities is good for him because this purifies his heart and completely frees him from



false ego. Always hungry, longing for sufficient food, a poverty-stricken man gradually becomes weaker and weaker. Having insufficient strength, his senses are automatically pacified. A poverty-stricken man, therefore, is unable to perform harmful, envious activities. In other words, such a man automatically gains the results of the austerities and penances adopted voluntarily by saintly persons.

Saintly persons may freely associate with those who are poverty-stricken, but not with those who are rich. A poverty-stricken man, by association with saintly persons, very soon becomes uninterested in material desires, and the dirty things within the core of his heart are completely eradicated. Saintly persons [*sādhus*] think of Krishna twenty-four hours a day. They have no other interest. Why should people neglect the association of such exalted spiritual personalities and try to associate with materialists, taking shelter of non-devotees, most of whom are proud and rich? Therefore, since these two persons, drunk with the liquor named *Vāruṇī*, or *Mādhvī*, and unable to control their senses, have been blinded by the pride of celestial opulence and have become attached to women, I shall relieve them of their false prestige. These two young men, Nalakuvara and Manigriva, are by fortune the sons of the great demigod Kuvera; but because of false prestige and madness after drinking liquor, they are so fallen that they are naked but cannot understand it. Therefore, because they are living like trees (for trees are naked but are not conscious), these two young men should receive the bodies of trees. This will be proper punishment. Nonetheless, after they become trees and until they are released, by my mercy they will have full remembrance of their past sinful activities. Moreover, by my special favor, after the expiry of one hundred years by the measurement of the demigods, they will be able to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva, face to face, and thus revive their real position as devotees.

Having thus spoken, the great saint *Devarṣi* Narada returned to his *āśrama*, known as *Nārāyaṇa-āśrama*, and Nalakuvara and Manigriva became twin arjuna trees. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, to fulfill the promise of the greatest devotee, Narada, slowly went to that spot where the twin arjuna trees were standing.

“Although these two young men are the sons of the very rich Kuvera and I have nothing to do with them, *Devarṣi* Narada is My very dear and affectionate devotee, and therefore because he wanted Me to come face to face with them, I must do so for their deliverance.” Having thus spoken, Krishna soon entered between the two arjuna trees, and thus the big mortar to which He was bound turned crosswise and stuck between them. By dragging behind Him with great force the wooden mortar tied to His belly,

the boy Krishna uprooted the two trees. By the great strength of the Supreme Person, the two trees, with their trunks, leaves and branches, trembled severely and fell to the ground with a great crash. Thereafter, in that very place where the two arjuna trees had fallen, two great, perfect personalities, who appeared like fire personified, came out of the two trees. The effulgence of their beauty illuminating all directions, with bowed heads they offered obeisances to Krishna, and with hands folded they spoke the following words.

O Lord Krishna, Your opulent mysticism is inconceivable. You are the supreme, original person, the cause of all causes both immediate and remote, and yet You are beyond this material creation. Learned *brāhmaṇas* know [on the basis of the Vedic statement *sarvaṁ khalvidam brahma*] that You are everything and that this cosmic manifestation, in its gross and subtle aspects, is Your form. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the controller of everything. The body, life, ego and senses of every living entity are Your own self. You are the Supreme Person, Vishnu, the imperishable controller. You are the time factor, the immediate cause, and You are material nature, consisting of the three modes passion, goodness and ignorance. You are the original cause of this material manifestation. You are the Supersoul within the core of the heart of every living entity, and therefore You know everything about everyone. O Lord, You exist before the creation. Therefore, who, trapped by a body of material qualities in this material world, can understand You? O Lord, whose glories are covered by Your own energy, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You are Sankarsana, the origin of creation, and You are Vasudeva, the origin of the *caturvyūha*. Because You are everything and are therefore the Supreme Brahman, we simply offer our respectful obeisances unto You. Appearing in bodies like those of an ordinary fish, tortoise and pig, You exhibit activities impossible for such creatures to perform - extraordinary, incomparable, transcendental activities of unlimited power and strength. These bodies of Yours, therefore, are not made of material elements, but are incarnations of Your Supreme Personality. You are the same Supreme Personality of Godhead, who have now appeared, with full potency, for the benefit of all living entities within this material world.

O supremely auspicious, we offer our respectful obeisances unto You, who are the supreme good. O most famous descendant and controller of the Yadu dynasty, O son of Vasudeva, O most peaceful, let us offer our obeisances unto Your lotus feet. O supreme form, we are always servants of Your servants, especially of Narada Muni. Now please give us permission to leave for our home. It is by the grace and mercy of Narada Muni that we have been able to see You face to face. Henceforth, may all our words describe Your pastimes, may our ears engage in aural



reception of Your glories, may our hands, legs and other senses engage in actions pleasing to You, and may our minds always think of Your lotus feet. May our heads offer our obeisances to everything within this world, because all things are also Your different forms, and may our eyes see the forms of Vaisnavas, who are non-different from You.

The two young demigods thus offered prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although Sri Krishna, the Supreme Godhead, is the master of all and was certainly Gokuleshvara, the master of Gokula, He was bound to the wooden mortar by the ropes of the gopis, and therefore, smiling widely, He spoke to the sons of Kuvera the following words.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: The great saint Narada Muni is very merciful. By his curse, he showed the greatest favor to you, who were mad after material opulence and who had thus become blind. Although you fell from the higher planet *svarga-loka* and became trees, you were most favored by him. I knew of all these incidents from the very beginning.

When one is face to face with the sun, there is no longer darkness for one's eyes. Similarly, when one is face to face with a *sādhū*, a devotee who is fully determined and surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one will no longer be subject to material bondage. O Nalakuvara and Manigriva, now you may both return home. Since you desire to be always absorbed in My devotional service, your desire to develop love and affection for Me will be fulfilled, and now you will never fall from that platform.

Sukadeva Goswami said: Having been spoken to in this way by The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the two demigods circumambulated the Lord, who was still bound to the wooden mortar, and offered obeisances to Him. After taking the permission of Lord Krishna, they returned to their respective homes.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa)* » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 10: The Deliverance of the Yamala-arjuna Trees » Verse: 1-43

HOW CAN ONE DESTROY HIS MATERIAL BONDAGE?

Sri Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

One is released from material bondage by seeing those whose minds are not disturbed by respect or disrespect, and those who have offered their minds completely to Krishna.

One's bondage will continue until he sees (*darśana*) a devotee. Just as the sun destroys the darkness just by rising, one's bondage is destroyed immediately upon seeing a pure devotee. However, it should be

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understood from this example that even though the sun rises, the darkness will not be dissipated if a person is blind. Similarly, if one commits *nāma-aparādha*, as in the case of the demons, he will not be released from bondage even if he sees a *sādhū* like Narada Muni.

— *From Sārārtha-darśinī commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam by Srila Vishvanātha Cakravartī Thakura* » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 10: The Deliverance of the Yamala-arjuna Trees » Verse 41 » Translated by His Holiness Bhanu Swami.

CAUSELESS MERCY OF NARADA MUNI His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Nalakuvara and Manigriva actually had nothing to do with devotional service or seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face, for this is not an ordinary opportunity. It is not that because one is very rich or learned or was born in an aristocratic family one will be able to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face. This is impossible. But in this case, because Narada Muni desired that Nalakuvara and Manigriva see Him face to face, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Vasudeva wanted to fulfill those words of His very dear devotee. If one seeks the favor of a devotee instead of directly asking favors from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one is very easily successful. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has therefore recommended: *vaiṣṇava thākura tomāra kukkura bhuliyā jānaha more, kṛṣṇa se tomāra kṛṣṇa dite pāra*. One should desire to become like a dog in strictly following a devotee. Krishna is in the hand of a devotee. *Adurlabhamātmā-bhaktau*. Thus without the favor of a devotee, one cannot directly approach Krishna, what to speak of engaging in His service. Narottama dasa Thakura therefore sings, *chāḍiyā vaiṣṇava-sevā nistāra pāyeche kebā*: unless one becomes a servant of a pure devotee, one cannot be delivered from the material condition of life. In our Gaudiya Vaishnava society, following in the footsteps of Rupa Goswami, our first business is to seek shelter of a bona fide spiritual master (*ādaugurv-āśrayaḥ*).

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa)* » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 10: The Deliverance of the Yamala-arjuna Trees » Verse: 25, Purport.

HOW CAN WE MEET A BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER?

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura

What type of *guru* should we take shelter of?

If I am fortunate enough, I will take shelter of a spiritual master who always worships Hari. I should surrender to a spiritual master who is cent percent engaged in the Lord's service. Otherwise, unable to



follow his ideal example, I will not be able to engage myself cent percent in the Lord's service. A person devoid of proper etiquette, a platform speaker, or a professional priest cannot become *guru*. If we accept such a spiritual master, unfortunately, we cannot learn to worship Hari. A spiritual master must be free from material desire, self-controlled, well conversant with scripture, and self-realized. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.3.21) states,

*tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta, jijṣāsuḥ śreyāuttamam
sābde pare ca niṣṇātām, brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam*

“Therefore, any person who seriously desires real happiness must seek a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of the bona fide *guru* is that he has realized the conclusions of the scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters.”

Is receiving the spiritual master's mercy the only way to attain Krishna's mercy?

The spiritual master is non-different from Lord Nityananda. By his mercy we receive Krishna's holy name, initiation into *kṛṣṇa-mantras*, and proper instruction by which we can attain eternal auspiciousness. Without the spiritual master's mercy we cannot receive the mercy of Lord Gaurāṅga and Sri Rādhā-Govinda. Our previous *ācārya*, Srīla Narottama dāsa Thākura, has explained this: “The jivas' material existence is exhausted and the wealth of love of God is attained simply by their receiving the spiritual master's mercy.” The spiritual master, who is our devotional teacher, is an intimate devotee of Sri Gaurāṅga. By serving such a *guru* with love, our perfection is guaranteed.

Those whose hearts have become hard due to material attachment cannot purely chant the holy name of Krishna, who killed the Agha demon. If, however, we hear Hari's holy name attentively from the mouth of the spiritual master, then the holy name will certainly intoxicate us. If the spiritual master bestows unconditional mercy upon us, seeing our sincere humility and eagerness, glorification of Hari will come from our mouth with intensity.

Who is the internal spiritual master?

The localized Paramatma, the individual Godhead situated within the heart of every living entity, who is described in the Vedas beginning with the verse *dvāsuparṇā*, is the internal, pure, unalloyed “conscience spiritual master,” the *caitya-guru*.

How will we meet a bona fide spiritual master?

The Supreme Lord is present in our heart as the internal spiritual master and outside our heart as a pure devotee. If we are sincere, the Lord will guide us to a pure devotee. We may approach Him and beg for such mercy, but He is the sole in-charge for granting our wish. We cannot question Him if He refuses to grant it. Krishna is not the caretaker of our garden. Our duty is to wait patiently for His mercy. In the meantime, we should give up material desire and engage in His service. If we sincerely seek His mercy, He will certainly bestow it upon us. Simply by His mercy we will obtain a bona fide spiritual master. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* states, *kṛṣṇa yadi kṛpā kare kona bhāgyavāne, guru-antaryāmi-rūpe śikhāya āpane*: “Krishna is situated in everyone's heart as the *caitya-guru*, the spiritual master within. When He is kind to some fortunate conditioned soul, He personally gives him lessons so he can progress in devotional service, instructing the person as the Supersoul within and the spiritual master without.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya Lila*, 22.47)

How can we understand the Absolute Truth?

The Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the cause of all causes. The Absolute Truth is self-manifest. He is not dead matter. He is fully cognizant. He manifests before us out of His own sweet will. It is impossible to know Him by mundane experience or the ascending path. The Absolute is not an object belonging to the three dimensions. We can measure objects belonging to the three dimensions. Anything that can be measured with our material senses belongs to the world of Maya.

As we have to open our eyes if we wish to see the sun, we have to wait until our internal spiritual consciousness is revived before we can realize the Absolute. As we cannot see the sun at night even if we illuminate the sky with thousands of electric lights—and as there is no need of artificial lighting once the sun rises in the morning—so the Absolute Truth cannot be illuminated by sensually acquired knowledge. As long as we are materially conditioned, we cannot understand the Absolute Truth's identity. We must hear about Him from our spiritual master. Thus there is no way to know the Absolute Truth except to surrender at our spiritual master's lotus feet.

How will I understand whether or not a spiritual master is bona fide?

The spiritual master we choose, or a person who, according to our consideration is qualified to be *guru*, may not be bona fide. Only a person sent personally by Krishna will manifest before us as the bona fide spiritual master.



What is the function of the *caitya-guru* (Supersoul) and the other forms of *guru*?

The Supreme Lord regulates the living entity's good and bad propensities by residing in their hearts as the Supersoul. The Supersoul or internal spiritual master directs all living entities. The Supersoul also guides us to a spiritual master. Aside from this, the spiritual master's servants act as instructing spiritual masters.

Persons who glorify the *śāstras*, who explain *śāstra* to others, and who act according to *śāstric* injunctions regulate the restless, materially contaminated minds of ignorant people. Such instructing spiritual masters help people before they receive initiation from a spiritual master.

Without the mercy of the internal spiritual master (*caitya-guru*), no one can become qualified to serve the lotus feet of the initiating and instructing spiritual masters. Until we accumulate piety in the form of Krishna's mercy, we cannot achieve the true mercy of the *caitya-guru*. As long as our hearts are filled with the desire for religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation, we cannot aspire for devotional service. However, if due to good fortune we desire to take shelter at the Lord's lotus feet, then the internal spiritual master will mercifully guide us to initiating and instructing *gurus*.

The devotee spiritual master is attained by the *caitya-guru*'s mercy. The *caitya-guru* bestows mercy in two ways, and it is because of these two forms of mercy that some people become materialists and others become devotees. Materialists are people who have accepted sense gratification as their ultimate goal. Instead of searching for devotional service, which is the ultimate goal of life, such people seek temporary happiness. This is the *caitya-guru*'s 'tricky mercy'. Only a cheater is fit to receive such 'tricky mercy.' Pious, sincere devotees, however, become glorious by receiving the *caitya-guru*'s true mercy. If someone, despite becoming the Supreme Lord's servant wants something other than his Lord's service, what can he be but a cheater?

An instructing spiritual master teaches a surrendered disciple to accept an initiating spiritual master. Therefore even though there may be many instructing spiritual masters, there is no difference in opinion between such *gurus* and the initiating spiritual master, who awards the disciple transcendental knowledge. Rather, an instructing spiritual master is a real friend to the initiating spiritual master.

A living entity's awareness of his constitutional position is revived when he receives transcendental knowledge. At that time, those who give instructions regarding the process of Hari's devotional service are called instructing spiritual masters. The initiating spiritual master is situated between the commander-in-chief and the ordinary soldiers who are in the form of instructing spiritual masters.

Only a person who is favored by the Lord in the form of the *caitya-guru* receives the good fortune to understand the devotee of the Lord as his bona fide spiritual master. Only by the Lord's mercy can a living entity see the beautiful toenails of a bona fide spiritual master's and thus make his life successful.

What do we need to do now?

We must hear from a bona fide spiritual master. When we first hear from *guru* his words appear revolting to us. Some unfortunate people dare to think we can correct our spiritual master by our own experience. But the current of mundane thoughts cannot attack the spiritual master; he is situated millions of miles from such thoughts. He is known as *guru* because his position does not shift; he is the heaviest personality.

What is the result of taking shelter at the feet of a bona fide spiritual master?

By taking shelter of a bona fide spiritual master a living entity can achieve the highest position on the path of worshiping Hari. By serving *guru* and Krishna a living entity's mundane conceptions are destroyed and he attains Goloka. As a result of such sincere service a living entity can attain an equal position with liberated souls—even eternally liberated souls. The spiritual master, who is non-different from Lord Nityananda, is not a lump of flesh and blood. By taking shelter at his lotus feet a living entity can attain freedom from the threefold material miseries.

Is it true that the dust from the feet of *guru* and Vaisnavas is worshipable?

If the spiritual master and the saintly persons mercifully allow us to take dust from their lotus feet, we should respectfully accept it. However there is a possibility of inviting inauspiciousness if we forcibly or by request try to take dust from their lotus feet. One day, when a person named Vrindavanachandra Lashkar touched my spiritual master's lotus feet, my spiritual master became upset and said, "How dare you touch my feet? You will go to hell." When Lashkar told me about it I explained, "Even persons like Brahma have difficulty achieving the spiritual master's lotus feet. Attaining the spiritual master's feet is rare. Therefore what right or qualification do we have to touch the *guru*'s feet? We cannot approach the spiritual master unless we are eligible. We cannot approach the spiritual master with our sinful mentalities and offensive hearts."

One day, out of his causeless mercy, my spiritual master personally took the dust from his own lotus feet and smeared it on my head. Such was his mercy!



What are the initiating and instructing gurus? What is the function of the guru who dwells in the heart?

There are three types of spiritual masters, the initiating *guru*, the instructing *guru*, and the *caitya-guru*. The spiritual master is never ordinary. He is godly. It is an offense to separate the spiritual master from Sri Krishna Chaitanya by considering him an ordinary, insignificant human being. In the form of the spiritual master, Krishna alone awakens the living entity's spiritual consciousness and thereby helps him attain eternal benefit.

The initiating spiritual master awards transcendental knowledge, knowledge of the Absolute Truth. "Krishna alone is my eternal master and I am His eternal servant": this transcendental knowledge or *sambandha-jñāna* is imparted by the initiating spiritual master.

An instructing spiritual master first tells us how to remove *anarthas* (the unprogressive impressions in our heart). He then teaches us the process of pure devotion. In most cases the initiating spiritual master acts as the instructing spiritual master. A conditioned soul cannot act as an initiating or instructing spiritual master. An initiating spiritual master gives both *mantras* and instructions on *bhajana* (the process of worship). An instructing spiritual master teaches the process of *bhajana* after our *anarthas* are destroyed.

Sri Hari, who dwells in our hearts as the Supersoul, is the internal spiritual master, *caitya-guru*. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* states, *kṛṣṇa yadi kṛpā kare kona bhāgyavāne, guru-antaryāmi-rūpe śikhāya āpane*: "Krishna is situated in everyone's heart as the *caitya-guru*, the spiritual master within. When He is kind to some fortunate conditioned soul, He personally gives him lessons so he can progress in devotional service, instructing the person from within as the Supersoul and externally as the spiritual master." (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya 22.47*)

The *caitya-guru* awards us the qualification to realize the instructions we have heard from the initiating and instructing *gurus*. He also imparts the strength to follow those orders. Without His mercy, no one can understand the intention of either the initiating or instructing spiritual master. Lord Sri Gaurangadeva alone awards transcendental knowledge and pure devotional service through the initiating spiritual master, protects that pure devotion by sending the instructing spiritual masters (who are nondifferent from Him), and as the internal spiritual master personally awards the strength to follow the *gurus'* orders and teachings.

Is anything possible without the spiritual master's mercy?

I am blinded by ignorance, so who will show me the right path? Who will impart to me real knowledge? Everything is attained simply by the spiritual master's

mercy. We are fallen conditioned souls and the spiritual master is our only shelter. A spiritual master is he who always serves the Supreme Lord. The spiritual master is the servitor God. Are we looking at him in that way? If not, how can we expect to benefit from his association?

—*AmṛtaVāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Prabhupāda, Compiled by Śrīpāda Bhakti Mayukha Bhāgavat Mahārāja, Translated from Bengali by Bhūmipatidāsa, Adapted and Published by Īśvaradāsa.* ❀

NATURE OF ASSOCIATION

Compilation of Verses

"Nature is born from association. One's nature is determined according to one's association. The faith that a living entity develops by his actions inspired by his previous life's association, is changed by the association in his present life. Therefore association is the root cause of a living entity's nature."

—*Sajjana Toṣaṇī 15/2, Bhakti Vinod Thakura*

*‘śreyo-madhye kona śreyah jīvera haya sāra?’
‘Krishna-bhakta-saṅga vinā śreyah nāhi āra’*

Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu asked, "Out of all auspicious and beneficial activities, which is best for the living entity?"

Ramananda Raya replied, "The only auspicious activity is association with the devotees of Krishna."

—*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 8.251*

*sat-saṅgān mukta-duḥsaṅgo
hātuṁ notsahate budhaḥ
kīrtyamānaṁ yaśo yasya
sakṛd ākarmaṇya rocanam*

The intelligent, who have understood the Supreme Lord in association with pure devotees and have become freed from bad materialistic association, can never avoid hearing the glories of the Lord, even though they have heard them only once.

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) 1.10.11*

*satām prasāṅgān mama vīrya-saṁvido
bhavanti hṛt-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ kathāḥ
taj-joṣaṇād āśv apavarga-vartmani
śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati*

In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes

fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) 3.25.25

*yaśaḥ śivam suśrava ārya-saṅgame
yadṛcchayā copāśṛṇoti te sakṛt
katham guṇa-jñō viramed vinā paśum
śrīr yat pravavre guṇa-saṅgrahacchayā*

My dear highly glorified Lord, if one, in the association of pure devotees, hears even once the glories of Your activities, he does not, unless he is nothing but an animal, give up the association of devotees, for no intelligent person would be so careless as to leave their association. The perfection of chanting and hearing about Your glories was accepted even by the goddess of fortune, who desired to hear of Your unlimited activities and transcendental glories.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) 4.20.26

*durlabho mānuṣo deho
dehinām kṣaṇa-bhaṅguraḥ
tatṛpi durlabham manye
vaikuṇṭha-priya-darśanam*

For the conditioned souls, the human body is most difficult to achieve, and it can be lost at any moment. But I think that even those who have achieved human life rarely gain the association of pure devotees, who are dear to the Lord of Vaikuntha.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) 11.2.29

*ata ātyantikam kṣemam
pṛcchāmo bhavato 'naghāḥ
saṁsāre 'smin kṣaṇārdho 'pi
sat-saṅgaḥ śevadhir nṛṇām*

O completely sinless ones, I ask you to kindly tell me what the supreme good is. After all, even half a moment's association with pure devotees within this world of birth and death is a priceless treasure for any man.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) 11.2.30

*kona bhāgye kāro saṁsāra kṣayonmukha haya
sādhu-saṅge tabe kṛṣṇe rati upajaya*

“By good fortune one becomes eligible to cross the ocean of nescience, and when one's term of material existence decreases, one may get an opportunity to associate with pure devotees. By such association, one's attraction to Krishna is awakened.

—Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 22.45

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
na rodhayati mām yogo
na sāṅkhyam dharma eva ca
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo
neṣṭā-pūrtam na dakṣiṇā
vratāni yajñas chandāṁsi
tīrthāni niyamā yamāḥ
yathāvarundhe sat-saṅgaḥ
sarva-saṅgāpaho hi mām*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, by associating with My pure devotees one can destroy one's attachment for all objects of material sense gratification. Such purifying association brings Me under the control of My devotee. One may perform the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system, engage in philosophical analysis of the elements of material nature, practice nonviolence and other ordinary principles of piety, chant the Vedas, perform penances, take to the renounced order of life, execute sacrificial performances and dig wells, plant trees and perform other public welfare activities, give in charity, carry out severe vows, worship the demigods, chant confidential *mantras*, visit holy places or accept major and minor disciplinary injunctions, but even by performing such activities one does not bring Me under his control.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) 11.12.1-2



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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Sweet Pastimes of Lord Krishna

Features

SWEET PASTIMES OF LORD KRISHNA

Conversation between

Sukadeva Goswami and Maharaja Parikshit

SHOULD WE ALLOW THE SINGING OF LORD'S CONJUGAL PASTIMES IN THE TEMPLE?

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura

THE MEETING ROOM OF NANDA MAHARAJA

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SWEET PASTIMES OF LORD KRISHNA

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When the *yamala-arjuna* trees fell, all the cowherd men in the neighborhood, hearing the violent sound and fearing thunderbolts, hurried to the place they fell. There they saw the *yamala-arjuna* trees on the ground, but they were bewildered because, even though they could see that the trees had fallen, they could not understand why Krishna was still tied by ropes to the mortar which He was dragging. But how could He have pulled down the trees? Who had actually done it? Where was the source for this incident? Considering all these things astonishing, the cowherd men were doubtful and bewildered.

Then all the cowherd boys said: It is Krishna who has done this. When He was in between the two trees, the mortar fell crosswise. Krishna dragged the mortar, and the two trees fell down. After that, two beautiful men came out of the trees. We have seen this with our own eyes.

Because of intense paternal affection, the cowherd men, headed by Nanda, could not believe that Krishna could have uprooted the trees in such a wonderful way. Therefore, they could not put their faith in the words of the boys. Some of the men, however, considered, "Since Krishna was predicted to be equal to Narayana," they thought, "it might be that He has done it." When Nanda

Maharaja saw his son tied with ropes to the wooden mortar and dragging it behind Him, he smiled and released Krishna from His bonds.

The gopis would say, "If You dance, my dear Krishna, then I shall give You half a sweet-meat." By saying these words or by clapping their hands, all the gopis encouraged Krishna in different ways. At such times, although He was the supremely powerful Personality of Godhead, He would smile and dance according to their desire, as if He were a wooden doll in their hands. Sometimes He would sing very loudly, at their bidding. In this way, Krishna came completely under the control of the gopis. Sometimes mother Yashoda and her gopi friends would tell Krishna, "Bring this article" or "Bring that article." Sometimes they would order Him to bring a wooden plank, wooden shoes or a wooden measuring pot, and Krishna, when thus ordered by the mothers, would try to bring them. Sometimes, however, as if unable to raise these things, He would touch them and stand there. Just to invite the pleasure of His relatives, He would strike His body with His arms to show that He had sufficient strength. To pure devotees throughout the world who could understand His activities, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, exhibited how He can be subdued by His devotees, His servants. In this way He increased the pleasure of the *Vrajavāsīs* by His childhood activities.

Once a woman selling fruit was calling, "O



inhabitants of Vrajabhumi, if you want to purchase some fruits, come here!” Upon hearing this, Krishna immediately took some grains and went to barter as if He needed some fruit. While Krishna was going to the fruit vendor very hastily, most of the grains He was holding in His small hand fell out. Nonetheless, the fruit vendor filled Krishna’s hands with fruit, and simultaneously Krishna filled her fruit basket with jewels and gold.

Once, after the uprooting of the *yamala-arjuna* trees, Rohinidevi went to call Rama and Krishna, who had both gone to the riverside and were playing with the other boys with deep attention. Because of being absorbed in playing with the other boys, Krishna and Balarama did not return upon being called by Rohini. Therefore, Rohini sent mother Yashoda to call Them, because mother Yashoda was more affectionate to Krishna and Balarama. Krishna and Balarama, were very attached to playing, and continued to play with the other boys although it was past the time of Their lunch. Therefore, mother Yashoda called Them to come home and eat. Because of deep affection for Krishna and Balarama, milk flowed from her breasts as she looked upon Them.

Mother Yashoda said: My dear son Krishna, lotus-eyed Krishna, come here and drink my milk. My dear darling, You must be very tired because of hunger and the fatigue of playing so long. There is no need to play any more. My dear Baladeva, best of our family, please come immediately with Your younger brother, Krishna. You both ate only in the morning, so now You ought to eat something more. Nanda Maharaja, the King of Vraja, is now waiting to take his lunch..

O my dear son Balarama, Nanda Maharaja is waiting for You too. Therefore, come back to please us. All the boys playing with You and Krishna should now go to their homes.

Mother Yashoda further told Krishna: My dear son, because of playing all day, Your body has become covered with dust and sand. Therefore, come back, take Your bath and cleanse Yourself. Today the moon is conjoined with the auspicious star of Your birth. Therefore, bathe and become pure and then you can give cows in charity to the *brāhmaṇas*. Just see how all Your playmates have been washed and decorated with beautiful ornaments by their mothers. You should come here, and after You have taken Your bath, eaten Your lunch and been decorated with ornaments, You may play with Your friends again.

Because of intense love and affection, Krishna’s mother Yashoda, considered Him, who was at the source of all opulences, to be her son. Thus she took Krishna along with Balarama by the hand,

and brought Them home. There she performed her duties by fully bathing Them, and then dressing and feeding Them.

Having seen the great disturbances in Brihadvana, one time all the elderly persons among the cowherd men, headed by Nanda Maharaja, assembled and began to consider what to do to stop the continuous disturbing situations in Vraja. At this meeting of all the inhabitants of Gokula, a cowherd man named Upananda who was the most mature in age and knowledge and very experienced in making decisions according to time, place and circumstances, made a suggestion for the benefit of Rama and Krishna.

Upananda said: My dear cowherd friends, in order to do good to this place, Gokula, we should leave, because so many disturbances are continuously occurring here as if, just for the purpose of killing Rama and Krishna. This child Krishna, simply by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was somehow or other rescued from the hands of the *rākṣasī* Putana, who intended to kill Him. Then, again by the mercy of the Supreme Godhead, the handcart missed falling upon the child. After that, the demon Trinavarta, in the form of a whirl-wind, took the child away and carried Him high into the sky. He also intended to kill Him, but the demon fell down onto a slab of stone. In that case also, by the mercy of Lord Vishnu or His associates, the child was saved.

Even the other day, neither Krishna nor any of His playmates died from the falling of the two trees, although the children were near the trees or even between them. This also is to be considered the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. All these incidents are being caused by some unknown demon. Before he comes here to create another disturbance, it is our duty to relocate ourselves somewhere else where there will be no more disturbances for the boys..

Between Nandeshvara and Mahavana is a place named Vrindavana. This place is very suitable because it is lush with grass, plants and creepers for the cows and other animals. It has nice gardens and tall mountains and is full of facilities for the happiness of all the gopas and gopis and our animals. Therefore, let us immediately go today. There is no need to wait any further. If you agree to my proposal, let us prepare all the bullock carts and put the cows in front of us, and let us go there.

Upon hearing this advice from Upananda, the cowherd men unanimously agreed. “Very nice, very nice” they said. Thus they sorted out their household affairs, placed their clothing and other paraphernalia on the carts, and immediately started for Vrindavana. Placing all the old men, women,

children as well as the household paraphernalia on the bullock carts and keeping all the cows in front, the cowherd men picked up their bows and arrows with great care and sounded bugles made of horn.

In this way, with bugles vibrating all around, the cowherd men, accompanied by their priests, began their journey. The cowherd women, riding on the bullock carts, were dressed very nicely with excellent garments, and their bodies especially their bosom was decorated with fresh *kunkuma* powder.

As they rode, they sung with great pleasure about the pastimes of Krishna. Thus very happily hearing about the pastimes of Krishna and Balarama, mother Yashoda and Rohinidevi, so as not to be separated from Krishna and Balarama for even a moment, sat with Them on one bullock cart. In this way, they all looked very beautiful to behold. Like this they entered Vrindavana, where in all seasons it is pleasing to live. They made a temporary camp by placing their bullock carts around them in the shape of a half moon. When Rama and Krishna saw Vrindavana, Govardhana and the banks of the river Yamuna, They both experienced great pleasure.

Krishna and Balarama, acting like small boys and talking in broken language, gave transcendental pleasure to all the inhabitants of Vraja. In due course of time, They became old enough to take care of the calves. In a place not far away from Their residence, Krishna and Balarama, brought all kinds of toys and played with other cowherd boys whilst tending to the small calves. Sometimes Krishna and Balarama would play Their flutes, sometimes They would throw ropes and stones devised for getting fruits from the trees, sometimes They would throw only stones, and sometimes, Their ankle bells tinkling, They would play football with fruits like *bael* and *āmalaki*. Sometimes They would cover Themselves with blankets and imitate cows and bulls and fight with one another, roaring loudly, and sometimes They would imitate the calls of the animals. In this way They enjoyed sporting, exactly like two ordinary human children.

One day while Rama and Krishna along with Their playmates were tending the calves on the bank of the river Yamuna, another demon desiring to kill Them arrived there. When the Supreme Personality of Godhead saw that the demon had assumed the form of a calf and entered among the groups of other calves, He pointed out to Baladeva, "Here is another demon." Then He very slowly approached the demon, as if He did not understand his intentions. Sri Krishna caught



the disguised demon by the hind legs and tail, and very vigorously spun him until he died. Krishna then, threw his now huge body into the top of a *kapittha* tree, which in turn fell down. Upon seeing the dead body of the demon, all the cowherd boys exclaimed, "Well done, Krishna! Very good, very good! Thank You." In the upper planetary system, all the demigods were pleased, and therefore they showered flowers on the Supreme Personality of Godhead Krishna.

After the killing of the demon, Krishna and Balarama finished Their breakfast, and while continuing to take care of the calves, They wandered to different places. Krishna and Balarama, the Supreme Personalities of Godhead, who maintain the entire creation, now took charge of the calves as if They were ordinary cowherd boys. One day Krishna and Balarama and all the boys, each with his own group of calves, brought them to a reservoir of water, so they could drink. After the animals, the boys also drank water there. Right by the reservoir, the boys saw a gigantic form resembling a broken mountain peak broken struck down by a thunder-bolt. They were afraid even to see such a huge living being. That huge bodied demon was named Bakasura. He had assumed the body of a heron with a very sharp beak. Having come there, he immediately swallowed Krishna. When Balarama and the other boys saw that Krishna had been devoured by the gigantic heron, they became almost unconscious, like senses without life. Though Krishna, is the

father of Lord Brahma, He was acting as the son of a cowherd man. Still, He made Himself hot like fire, burning Bakasura's throat, and hence the demon immediately disgorged Him. When he saw that Krishna, although having been swallowed, was unharmed, he immediately attacked Krishna with his sharp beak. (50)

When Krishna, the leader of the Vaishnavas, saw that the demon Bakasura, the friend of Kamsa, was endeavoring to attack Him, He held the demon by the two halves of his beak, and in the presence of all the cowherd boys Krishna very easily bifurcated him, as a child splits a blade of grass. By thus killing the demon, Krishna very much pleased the denizens of heaven who, in turn showered *mallikā-puṣpa*, flowers grown in *Nandana-kānana*, upon Krishna, addressing Him as the enemy of Bakasura. They congratulated Him by also sounding celestial kettledrums and conchshells and by offering prayers. Seeing this, the cowherd boys were struck with wonder.

Just as the senses are pacified when consciousness and life return, so when Krishna was freed from this danger, all the boys, including Balarama, thought that their life had been restored. They joyfully embraced Krishna, and then collected their own calves and returned to Vrajabhumi, where they loudly narrated the whole incident.

Upon hearing about the killing of Bakasura in the forest cowherd men and women, were wonderous. Seeing Krishna and hearing the story, they received Him very eagerly, thinking that He and the other boys had returned from the mouth of death. Now that

Krishna and the boys were safe the cowherd men and women looked upon Them in contemplative silence, not wanting to turn their eyes away. The cowherd men, headed by Nanda Maharaja, began to think: It is very astonishing that although this boy Krishna has many faced many varied causes of death, by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead it was these causes that were killed and not Him. Although, these *daityas*, were very fierce, they could not kill this boy Krishna. Rather, because they came to kill innocent boys, as soon as they approached Him, they themselves were killed, exactly like flies attacking a fire. It is very wonderful that whatever Garga Muni predicted we are now actually experiencing in all detail. The words of persons in full knowledge of Brahman certainly never become untrue.

In this way all the cowherd men, headed by Nanda Maharaja, enjoyed discussing the pastimes of Krishna and Balarama with great transcendental pleasure, so much so that and they could not perceive any material distress. Krishna and Balarama passed Their childhood age in Vrajabhumi by engaging in activities of childish play, such as playing hide-and-seek, constructing a make believe bridge on the ocean, and jumping around it like monkeys.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (BhāgavataPurāṇa) » Canto 10: The SummumBonum
» Chapter 11: The Childhood Pastimes of Krishna» Verse: 1-59





THE MEETING ROOM OF NANDA MAHARAJA

Srila VishvanathaChakravartiThakura

Nanda Maharaja and the cowherd men sat in the meeting room, and repeatedly discussed the naughtiness of the boy and His killing of Vatsasura and Bakasura. They also composed songs which they sang again and again, and thus they did not perceive the tribulations of material existence.

Other elderly cowherd men coming from distant places informed Nanda about need to become liberated from the material world: “Half your life is gone. Why do you remain immersed in discussing about child, family and wife? Why don’t you concentrate on knowledge, detachment, austerity and remembrance of Narayana so that you get deliverance from the material world?” Though requested in this way, Nanda Maharaja and the other cowherd men did not pay any attention to that (*na avindan bhavasya vedanām*). To say that this phrase means that “they did not suffer the pains of material life” is not acceptable. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.6.40) describes the exalted nature of the cowherd men and women, who were not touched by the material world born of ignorance. There is no question that they could be affected by the pains of the material world. In this way, whatever appears as material tribulations simply nourishes the pastimes and therefore is called *līlā-māyā*.

Not only did the cowherd men speak about Krishna and His past and future pastimes, but they also enjoyed playing with Krishna (*ramamānāh*). Thus they did not know the sufferings of materialistic persons (*bhava vedanām*), though they were living in the material world. When the Vrajavaṣis say “I am suffering from hunger,” that hunger is not related to the material world.

— From *Sārārtha-darśinī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by *Srila VishvanāthaChakravartiThakura* » Canto 10: The SummumBonum » Chapter 11: The Childhood Pastimes of Krishna » Verse 58 » Translated by His Holiness Bhanu Swami. ॐ

SHOULD WE ALLOW THE SINGING OF LORD’S CONJUGAL PASTIMES IN THE TEMPLE?

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur

We do not object to hearing and chanting about Krishna’s pastimes. In fact, the Lord’s pastimes must be heard and chanted. Only then will the conditioned souls’ natural taste or eagerness for hearing and chanting about their own heroic activities and other forms of idle talk be destroyed. There is no substitute for this. We should hear from devotees of the Lord who are more elevated than

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ourselves. If we hear from materialists or others, we will gain nothing. We should hear glorification of the Lord only from a spiritual master or pure devotee. A real devotee has the determination that, “I will hear *hari-kathā* only from my spiritual master’s mouth. I will hear and discuss the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Sri Sukadeva Goswami spoke. I will hear glorification of the Lord as it was inaugurated by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, or discuss Lord Krishna’s names, forms, and qualities. I will discuss the Lord’s pure devotees, who are fully dedicated to their spiritual master.”

However, there is no difference between chanting about the Lord’s general pastimes and chanting about the mellows of the Lord’s conjugal pastimes. We should therefore not think that one is higher and the other lower. Hearing about the conjugal pastimes requires qualification. Living entities with *anarthas* can hear and chant about the pastimes of Lord Gauranga and the childhood pastimes of Lord Krishna. If people try to hear and chant about the confidential pastimes between Sri Radha and Krishna they will find misfortune rather than auspiciousness. Hearing and chanting about Sri Sri Radha-Krishna’s confidential pastimes is certainly the best way to worship the Lord. It is, however, improper and even offensive to sing about such pastimes in public. A person wishing to attain auspiciousness must obey these words from the *mahājanas*, *pana bhajana kathā na kahibe yatha tatha*: “Do not disclose your confidential mode of worship to anyone and everyone.”

We should sing the holy name’s glories, offer prayers to the Lord, and chant the glories of the Lord’s service where people of different natures and statuses are assembled. If we are qualified, only in the association of like-minded devotees, can we hear about the Lord’s confidential pastimes, perceiving our own mood according to our constitutional position. Otherwise we will receive an opposite result. If in order to maintain this standard, singing the Lord’s glories must be stopped altogether, let it be so. We are interested in benefiting the people. It is Kali who keeps alive the public singing of the Lord’s confidential pastimes simply to accumulate money and enjoy sense gratification.

—*AmṛtaVāṇī*: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Prabhupāda, Compiled by Śrīpāda Bhakti Mayukha Bhāgavat Mahārāja, Translated from Bengali by Bhumipatidāsa, Adapted and Published by Īśvaradāsa. ॐ

THE TWO KINDS OF PREMA

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura

Prema, love of Godhead, is of two kinds: *kevala-prema* (unalloyed love) and *mahīm-jnāna-yukta-*



prema (love mixed with knowledge, awe and reverential worship). The goal of *rāgānuga-bhakti-sādhana* is primarily *kevala-prema*. Devotees on the path of *vaidhi-bhakti-sādhana* attain such liberations as *sārūpya* (equal bodily feature), *sālokyā* (equal facility to live on the same planet with the Lord), *sārṣṭi* (equal possession of opulence like the Lord), and *sāmīpya* (equal association with the Lord). According to Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's teachings, *kevala-prema*, unalloyed devotional surrender is the pinnacle of all attainments and goals. *Kevala-prema* is further sub-divided as: *bhāvoṭṭha* (sprung from *bhāva*) and *prāsadoṭṭha* (sprung directly from mercy). Further sub-divisions of *bhāvoṭṭha* are: *vaidhi* and *rāgānuga*. *Prāsadoṭṭha* is extremely rare. *Bhavoṭṭha-prema* is more common and is described in the *Srī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā* (23.9-13, 39):

*kona bhāgye kona jīvera śraddhā yadi haya
tave sei jīva sādhu saṅga karaya
sādhu saṅga haite haya śravaṇa kīrtana
sādhana bhaktye haya sarvānārtha nivartana
anārtha nivṛtti haile bhakti niṣṭha haya
niṣṭha haite śravaṇādye ruci upajaya
ruci bhakti haite haya aśakti pracura
aśakti haite citte janme kṛṣṇe prīty ankura
sei rati gāḍha haila dhare prema nāma
sei prema prayojana sarvānanda dhāma
yānra citte kṛṣṇa prema karaye udaya
tānra vākya, kriyā, mudrā vijneha na bujhaya*

"If, by good fortune, a living entity develops faith in Krishna he begins to associate with pure devotees. Inspired by that association he begins the process of devotional service by hearing and chanting which cleanses his heart of all unwanted contamination. Freed from all contamination, his devotion advances to the stage of firm, undeviating faith. When firm faith awakens, taste for hearing and chanting blossoms. From taste for devotional service arises deep attachment, leading to the appearance in the heart of the seed of love, which begins to grow. When that stage of ecstasy intensifies, it is called love of Godhead, *prema*. *kṛṣṇa-prema* is the prime human necessity, life's ultimate goal and the reservoir of all pleasure. Even the most learned man could not understand the words, activities and symptoms of a person situated in love of Godhead."

The *Kārikā*, Explanatory Verse

*ākārṣa sannidhau lauhaḥ pravṛtto dṛśyate yathā
aṇor mahati caitanye pravṛtiḥ prītir eva sā
pratiphalana-dharmatvāt baddha-jīve nisargataḥ
itareṣu ca sarveṣu rāgo 'sti viṣayādiṣu
līnga-bhaṅgotarā bhaktiḥ śuddha-prītir anuttamā
tat pūrvam ātmānikṣepāt bhaktiḥ prītimayī satī*

"When iron is placed near a magnet the iron, acting according to its properties, is drawn to the magnet. Similarly, when the infinitesimal living entity

comes in front of Krishna, the infinite Supreme Being, its exhibits its innate characteristics—unalloyed spiritual love. This spontaneous spiritual emotion is self-perfected and self-manifesting in the transcendental realm. This material world is merely a perverted reflection of the spiritual abode. The living entity (*jīva*) has been forced to accept an alien nature in this material world, contrary to its original spiritual nature. Thus, he has developed an aberrant attachment for the base and gross material things—this becoming his second nature.

"As long as the *jīvas* subtle material body (consisting of mind, intelligence and false-ego) is not purified, pure spiritual emotions, which are transcendental and self-perfected, cannot awaken. The symptoms of *bhakti* exhibited after the dismantling of the *jīvas* subtle material body are indeed pure love of Godhead. Preceding this stage, the *jīva* must attempt to discard his material identity. He acknowledges his transcendental nature as a rarely attained gift and offers himself in full surrender. At this point, devotion can at best be affectionate, but not profound spontaneous love."

These matters described by Srila Krishnadasa Kaviraja in his immortal *Srī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā* (22.149, 153, 156-157, 159):

*rāgatmikā bhakti mukhyavrajavāsī jane
tā'raanugatabhaktirarāgānuganāme
lobhevrajavāsīrabhāvekareanugati
śāstrayuktinahimānerāgānugāraprakṛti
bāhya, abhyantara, ihāra dui ta'śādhana
bahyesādhakadehekareśravanakīrtana
mānenija siddha dehakariyabhāvan
ratri dīne karevrajekṛṣṇerasevana
nijābiṣṭhaKrishnapreṣṭhāpāche ta' lāgiyaś
nirantarasevākareantarmanāhaśā*

"The original inhabitants of Vrindavana are attached to Krishna spontaneously in devotional service. Nothing can compare to their devotional service, which is called *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. When a devotee follows in the footsteps of the devotees of Vrindavana his devotion is called *rāgānuga-bhakti*. If one is a follower of an eternal inhabitant of Vrindavana and develops covetousness (*lobha*) for his mood of surrender then he does not care for the injunctions and reasoning of the *śāstras*. That is the way of spontaneous love. One may execute this *rāgānuga-bhakti* by two processes—external and internal. The self-realised, advanced devotee externally remains like a neophyte and executes all the *śāstric* injunctions, especially hearing and chanting. However, within his mind, in his original purified self-realised position, he serves Krishna in

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Vrindavana in his particular way. He serves Krishna ceaselessly, throughout the day and night. Actually, the inhabitants of Vrindavana are very dear to Krishna. If one wants to engage in spontaneous loving service, he must follow the inhabitants of Vrindavana and constantly engage in devotional service within his mind.

The *Kārikā*, Explanatory Verse

*kṛṣṇa-bahirmukhe sā ca viṣaya-prītir eva hi
sā caiva kṛṣṇa-sammukhyāt kṛṣṇa-prītiḥ sunirmalā
raty ādi-bhāva-paryantam svarūpa-lakṣaṇam smṛtam
dāsyā-sakhyādi-sambandhāt sa caiva rasatām vrajet*

"The difference between love of Godhead, *kṛṣṇa-prema*, and love of matter is profound. As soon as the loving propensity is withdrawn from matter and dovetailed towards Krishna, it becomes love of Godhead (*prema*). On the other hand, when the *jīva* turns his back to Krishna and observes matter with the intent of enjoyment, he develops material attachment and love for matter. When the symptoms of the soul's original identity begin to manifest, they start on the level of *rati* and can reach the heights of *mahābhāva*. *Sthāyi-bhāva* is the *jīvas* steady constitutional emotion and it evokes the individual spiritual moods of *dāsyā*, *sakhyā*, *vātsalya* and *mādhurya*. It becomes a catalyst, helping the ecstatic symptoms to manifest, creating *rasa*, spiritual relish."

—The Ten Esoteric Truths of the Vedas, Om Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Bhaktivinode Thākura, Translated by Śrīman Sarvabhāvana Dāsa



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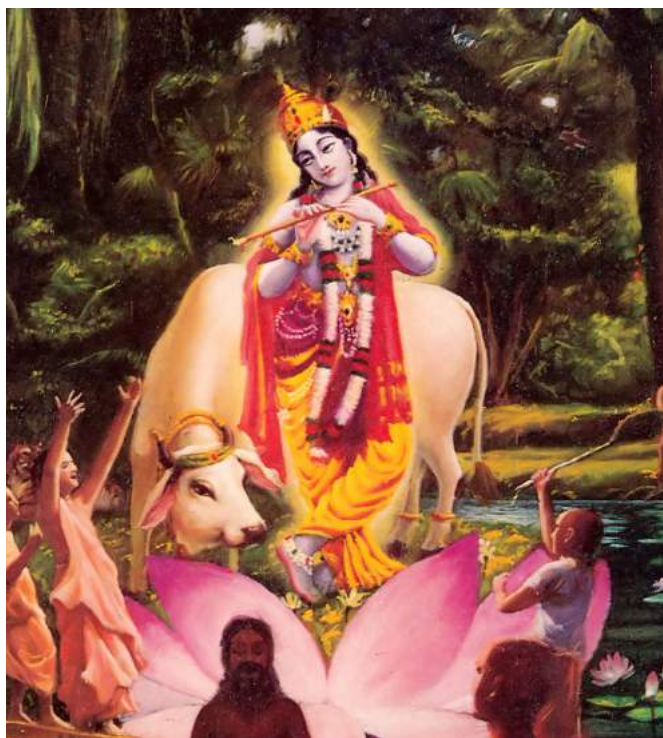
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SIMPLY BY OFFERING PRAYERS

ONE CAN BECOME PERFECT

His Divine Grace

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

PRAYERS

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura



WHO ARE PRACETAS?

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

Vijitasva, the eldest son of Maharaja Prithu, had a reputation like his father's, when he became the King, being affectionate to his brothers, he gave his younger brothers different regions of the world to rule. Vijitasva gave the eastern region to his brother Haryakṣa, the southern region to Dhumrakesha, the western region to Vrika and the northern region to Dravina. Having received the ability to disappear from Indra, Vijitasva was called also Antardhana (disappearance). In his wife Sikhandini, he begot three good sons. These three sons were named Pavaka, Pavamana and Suci. Formerly they were the *devatās* of fire, but due to the curse of Vasistha, they became the sons of Antardhana. Later they again they attained the powers of *devatās* of fire. Antardhana, was famous for not killing Indra while Indra was stealing his father's sacrificial horse, though he knew about it. In another wife, named Nabhasvati, he obtained a son named Havirdhana. On the plea of performing a long sacrifice Antardhana gave up the duties of the King such as receiving taxes and imposing punishment and fines, since he thought felt that he was thus giving suffering to the people. Though engaged in sacrifice, because he saw *ātmā*, he worshipped the Supreme Lord, *Paramātmā*, in the form called Hamsa, and thus easily attained the planet of the Lord by that concentration. Havirdhana, the son of Antardhana, begot through his wife named Havirdhani six sons, named Barhisat, Gaya, Shukla, Krishna, Satya and Jitavrata.

The most fortunate Barhisat, a son of Havirdhana and a Prajapati, was absorbed in performing sacrifices and

yoga. Under Barhisat, who performed many excellent sacrifices, each of which was dedicated to all the *devatās*, the whole earth was covered with *kuśa* grass with tips pointing east (*prācīna*). Under the direction of Brahma he married the daughter of the ocean named Śatadruti. Agnideva, seeing Śatadruti at the marriage ceremony with beautiful limbs, well decorated and in the prime of youth, became attracted to her as he had previously become attracted to Shuki. The *devatās*, demons, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Nagas and humans were captivated by the tinkling of her anklebells. Pracinabarhi begot ten children in the womb of Śatadruti. They were all equally qualified in religiosity and the performance of austerities, and were called the Pracetas. When ordered by their father to beget offspring, they entered the ocean for austerities. During the ten thousand years of their austerities, they worshipped the Supreme Lord, the original master of austerity. On their way to the ocean, they had met Lord Shiva whom they pleased. He taught them a prayer which they they meditated on, chanted and worshipped with complete control of their minds. In this way they worshipped the Supreme Lord.

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Sarartha Darsini » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » SB 4.24: Chanting the Song Sung by Lord Shiva» Verse: 1-15.*

LORD SHIVA INSTRUCTS PRACETAS

Sri Maitreya Ṛṣi

Vidura Inquired: My dear *brāhmaṇa*, please tell me how the Pracetas could meet Lord Shiva? Please tell me how the meeting happened, how Lord Shiva



became very pleased with them and how he instructed them. These topics are certainly important, and I request that you mercifully describe then to me. O best of the *brāhmaṇas*, it is very difficult for living entities engaged within the material body to have personal contact with Lord Shiva. Even great sages who have no material attachments cannot meet him, despite their always being absorbed in meditation for this purpose. Lord Shiva, the most powerful demigod, second only to Lord Vishnu, is self-sufficient. Although he has nothing to aspire for in the material world, he is always engages himself in auspicious activities everywhere for the benefit of others. He is also accompanied by his dangerous energies like the goddesses Kali and Durga.

My dear Vidura, because of their pious nature, all the sons of Pracinabarhi very seriously accepted the words of their father. Keeping them in their hearts, they went toward the west to execute those instructions.

While traveling, the Pracetas came across a great reservoir of water which seemed as big as the ocean. The water of this reservoir was so calm and quiet like the mind of a great soul. The aquatics living in that lake appeared very peaceful and happy in the shelter of such a reservoir. In that great lake there were different types of lotus flowers. Some of them were bluish, some red; some bloomed at night, some in the day, and some, like the *indīvara* lotus flower, in the evening. Together, the lotus flowers filled the lake so full that it appeared to be a great ocean of lotus flowers. Consequently, on the shores there were swans and cranes, *cakravakas*, *karandavas* and other beautiful water birds. On all sides of the lake, there were various trees and creepers, and intoxicated bumblebees hummed all around them. The trees appeared to be very jolly due to the sweet humming of the bumblebees, and the saffron from the lotus flowers, was blown around by the wind. All of this created a festive atmosphere.

The Pracetas became amazed when they heard the sound of kettledrums and other drums along with other pleasant musical sounds. They were very fortunate to see Lord Shiva, the chief of the demigods, as he emerged from the water with his associates. His bodily luster was like molten gold, his throat was bluish, and he had three eyes, with which he looked very mercifully upon his followers. He was accompanied by many musicians, glorifying him. As soon as the Pracetas saw Lord Shiva, they immediately offered their obeisance in great amazement and prostrated at his lotus feet. Lord Shiva is known as the protector of gentle and pious persons. Pleased with the Pracetas, he began to speak as follows:

Lord Shiva said: I know that you are the sons of King Pracinabarhi, and I wish all good fortune unto you. I also know your purpose in coming here, and I have appeared before you to give blessings. Any person who is surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead Krishna, the controller of everything - material nature as well as the living entity - is very dear to me.

*sva-dharma-niṣṭhaḥ śata-janmabhiḥ pumān
viriṣcatām eti tataḥ param hi mām
avyākṛtaṁ bhāgavato 'tha vaiṣṇavaṁ
padam yathāham vibudhāḥ kalātyaye*

A person who executes his occupational duty properly for one hundred births becomes qualified to occupy the post of Brahma; and if he becomes more qualified, he can approach Lord Shiva. A person who is surrendered to Lord Vishnu or Krishna and performs unalloyed devotional service to Him is immediately promoted to the spiritual planets unlike myself and other demigods who attain these planets only after the destruction of this material world. You are devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and as such, I appreciate that you are as respectable as the Lord Himself. I know that the devotees also respect me in this way and that I too am dear to them. Thus no one can be as dear to the devotees as I am. Now I shall chant one which is not only, pure, auspicious and transcendental but is also the best prayer for someone who is aspiring to attain the ultimate goal of life. Please hear it carefully and attentively.

Out of his causeless mercy, the exalted personality Lord Shiva, a great devotee of Lord Narayana, continued to speak to the King's sons, who were standing before him with folded hands.

Lord Shiva addressed the Supreme Personality of Godhead with the following prayer:

*śrī-rudra uvāca
jitam ta ātma-vid-varya-
svastaye svastir astu me
bhavatārādhāsā rāddham
sarvasmā ātmane namaḥ*

O Supreme Personality of Godhead, all glories unto You. You are the most exalted of all self-realized souls. Since You are always auspicious for even the self-realized, I wish that You bestow auspiciousness unto me. You are worshipable by virtue of the all-perfect instructions You give. You are the Supersoul; therefore I offer my obeisances unto You as the supreme living being.

My Lord, You are the origin of the creation by virtue of the lotus flower which sprouts from Your navel. You are the supreme controller of the senses and the sense objects, and You are also the all-pervading Vasudeva. You are most peaceful, and because of Your self-illuminated existence, You are not disturbed by the six bodily transformations. My dear Lord, You are the origin of the subtle material ingredients, the master of all integration as well as the master of all disintegration, the predominating Deity named Sankarsana, and the master of all intelligence, known as the Pradyumna. Therefore, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. My Lord, as the



supreme directing Deity known as Aniruddha, You are the master of the senses and the mind. I therefore offer my obeisance unto You again and again. You are known as Ananta and Sankarsana because of Your ability to destroy the entire creation by the fire blazing from Your mouth.

My Lord, O Aniruddha, You are the authority by whom the doors to the higher planetary systems and liberation are opened. You are always within the pure heart of the living entity. Therefore, I offer my obeisance unto You. You are the possessor of semen which is like gold, and thus, in the form of fire, You help the Vedic sacrifices, beginning with *cātur-hotra*. Therefore, I offer my obeisance unto You. My Lord, You are the provider for the *Pitrs* and all the demigods. You are the predominating deity of the moon and the master of all three Vedas. I offer my respectful obeisance unto You because You are the original source of satisfaction for all living entities. My dear Lord, You are the gigantic universal form which contains all the individual bodies of the living entities. You are the maintainer of the three worlds, and as such You maintain the mind, senses, body, and air of life within them. I therefore offer my respectful obeisance unto You. My dear Lord, by expanding Your transcendental vibrations, You reveal the actual meaning of everything. You are the all-pervading sky within and without, and You are the ultimate goal of pious activities executed both within this material world and beyond it. I therefore offer my respectful obeisance again and again unto You.

My dear Lord, You are the viewer of the results of pious activities. You are inclination, disinclination and their resultant activities. You are the cause of the miserable conditions of life caused by irreligion, and therefore You are death. I offer You my respectful obeisance. My dear Lord, You are the topmost bestower of all benedictions, the original and supreme enjoyer amongst all enjoyers. You are the master of all the worlds' metaphysical philosophy, for You are the supreme cause of all causes, Lord Sri Krishna. You are the greatest of all religious principles, the supreme mind, and You have a brain which is never limited by anything. Therefore, I repeatedly offer my obeisance unto You. My dear Lord, You are the supreme controller of the worker, sense activities and results of sense activities [*karma*]. Therefore, You are the controller of the body, mind and senses. You are also the supreme controller of ego, known as Rudra. You are the source of knowledge and the activities of the Vedic injunctions.

My dear Lord, I wish to see Your form that Your very dear devotees worship. You have many other forms, but I especially wish to see this form. Please be merciful upon me and show me that form, for only that form which is worshiped by the devotees can perfectly satisfy the senses. The Lord's beauty resembles a dark cloud during the rainy season. As the rainfall glistens, His bodily features also glisten. Indeed, He is the sum

total of all beauty. The Lord has four arms and an exquisitely beautiful face with eyes like lotus petals, a highly raised nose, an enchanting smile, an attractive forehead and fully ornamented ears. The Lord is super excellently beautiful on account of His wide, benevolent smile and His sidelong glances upon His devotees. His hair is dark and curly, and His yellow garments, swaying in the breeze, appear like saffron pollen wafting from lotus flowers. His glittering earrings, shining helmet, bangles, garland, ankle bells, waist belt and various other ornaments together with the conchshell, disc, club and lotus flower increase the natural beauty of the Kaustubha pearl on His chest. The Lord has shoulders like a lion. On His shoulders are glittering garlands, necklaces and epaulets. Besides these, there is the beauty of the *Kaustubha-maṇi*, and on the dark chest of the Lord there are streaks named *Śrīvatsa*, which are the insignia of the goddess of fortune. The glittering of these streaks excels the beauty of the golden lines on a gold-testing stone. Round shaped like a Banyan leaf, the Lord's abdomen is beautiful due to its three ripples. When He inhales and exhales, the movement of those ripples appears very, very beautiful. The coiled navel of the Lord is so deep that it appears as if the entire universe sprouted from it and yet wishes to go back. The lower part of the Lord's dark waist is covered with yellow garments and a golden embroidered belt. His symmetrical lotus feet and the calves, thighs and knees of His legs are extraordinarily beautiful. Indeed, the Lord's entire body is exquisitely proportioned.

My dear Lord, Your lotus feet are so beautiful that they are like the petals of a lotus flower blossoming in autumn. From the nails of Your lotus feet emanate a great effulgence which immediately dissipates the darkness in the heart of a conditioned soul. My dear Lord, kindly show me that form of Yours which always eradicates all darkness in the heart of Your devotee. You are the supreme spiritual master of everyone; therefore all conditioned souls covered with the darkness of ignorance are enlightened by You as the spiritual master.

My dear Lord, those who desire to purify their existence must always meditate on these lotus feet of Yours. Those who are serious about executing their occupational duties and who want freedom from fear must take to this process of *bhakti-yoga*. My dear Lord, the king of the heaven is also desirous of obtaining the ultimate goal of life - devotional service. Similarly, You are the ultimate destination of those who identify themselves with You [*aham brahmāsmi*]. However, it is very difficult for them to attain You, whereas a devotee can very easily attain Your Lordship. My dear Lord, pure devotional service is even difficult for liberated persons to discharge, but devotional service alone can satisfy You. Which person, serious about the perfection of life, will take to other processes of self-realization? Simply by expansion of His eyebrows, invincible time personified can immediately vanquish the entire



universe. However, formidable time himself does not approach the devotee who has completely taken shelter at Your lotus feet. If one by chance associates with a devotee, even for a fraction of a moment, he no longer attracted by the results of *karma* or *jñāna*. What interest then can he have in the benedictions of the demigods, who are themselves subject to the laws of birth and death? My dear Lord, Your lotus feet are the cause of everything auspicious and the destroyer of all the contamination of sin. I therefore beg Your Lordship to bless me by the association of Your devotees, who are completely purified by worshiping Your lotus feet and who naturally show mercy to the conditioned souls. I think that Your real benediction will be to allow me to associate with such devotees. The devotee whose heart has been completely cleansed by the process of devotional service, who is favored by Bhaktidevi, does not become bewildered by the external energy, which is like a dark well. Being completely cleansed of all material contamination in this way, a devotee is able to joyfully understand Your name, fame, form, activities, etc. My dear Lord, the impersonal Brahman spreads everywhere, like the sunshine or the sky. And that impersonal Brahman, which spreads throughout the universe and in which the entire universe is manifested, is You.

My dear Lord, You have manifold energies, and these energies are manifested in manifold forms. With such energies You have also created this cosmic manifestation, and although You maintain it as if it were permanent, You ultimately annihilate it. Although You are never bewildered by such changes and alterations, the living entities become bewildered, and therefore they find the cosmic manifestation to be different to or separated from You. My Lord, You are always independent; I can clearly see this fact. My dear Lord, Your universal form consists of the five elements, the senses, mind, intelligence, false ego (which is material) and the *Paramātmā*, Your partial expansion, who is the director of everything. Yogis other than Your devotees, namely the *karma-yogī* and *jñāna-yogī* worship You by their respective actions in their respective positions. It is stated both in the Vedas and in the Vedic corollary *śāstras*, and indeed everywhere, that it is only You who are to be worshiped. That is the expert version of all the Vedas.

My dear Lord, You are the only Supreme Person, the cause of all causes. Before the creation of this material world, Your material energy remains in a dormant condition. When Your material energy is agitated, the three qualities namely goodness, passion and ignorance become active. As a result the total material energy - egotism, ether, air, fire, water, earth and all the various demigods and saintly persons - becomes manifest. Thus the material world is created. My dear Lord, after creating by Your own potencies, You enter within the creation in four kinds of forms. Situating Yourself in the hearts of the living entities, You know them and know how they are utilising their senses. The so called happiness in this

material creation is like the bees' enjoyment of honey after it has been collected in the honeycomb.

My dear Lord, Your absolute authority cannot be directly experienced, but one can guess by seeing the activities of the world that everything is being destroyed in due course of time. The force of time is very strong, and everything is being destroyed by something else as one animal is eaten by another animal. Time scatters everything, as the wind scatters clouds in the sky. My dear Lord, all living entities within this material world are mad after planning for things, and they are always blindly busy with their desires to do something or other. This is due to an uncontrollable greed for material enjoyment which is always existing in the heart of a living entity. However Your Lordship is always alert, and in due course of time You grab them, as a snake very easily seizes a mouse and swallows him. My dear Lord, any learned person knows that unless he worships You, his entire life is spoiled. Knowing this, how could anyone give up worshiping Your lotus feet? Even our father and spiritual master, Lord Brahma, unhesitatingly worshiped You. The fourteen Manus followed in his footsteps. My dear Lord, all actually learned persons know You as the Supreme Brahman and the Supersoul. Although the entire universe is afraid of Lord Rudra, who ultimately annihilates everything, the learned devotees become free from fear by accepting Your lotus feet as the final destination.

My dear sons of the King, please execute your occupational duty as kings with a pure heart. Fixing your mind on the lotus feet of the Lord, recite this prayer. The Lord will be very much pleased, and that will bring you all good fortune. O sons of the King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, is situated in everyone's heart. He is also within your hearts. Therefore, chant the glories of the Lord and always meditate upon Him continuously. My dear princes, in the form of a prayer I have delineated the yoga system of chanting the holy name. All of you should keep this important *stotra* within your minds and thus become great sages. Maintaining silence like a sage and giving it great attention and reverence you should practice this method. This prayer was first spoken to us by Lord Brahma, the master of all creators. The subsequent creators, headed by Bhṛigu, were instructed in these prayers prior to their executing their duties. When all the Prajapatis were ordered to create by Lord Brahma, we chanted these prayers in praise of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and became completely free from all ignorance. Thus we were able to create different types of living entities.

A devotee of Lord Krishna whose mind is always absorbed in Him, who with great attention and reverence chants this *stotra* [prayer], will achieve the greatest perfection of life without delay. In this material world there are different types of achievement, but of all of them the achievement of knowledge is considered to be the highest. This is because one can cross only the



insuperable ocean of nescience on the boat of knowledge.. Although rendering devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and worshipping Him are very difficult, if one vibrates or simply reads this *stotra* [prayer] composed and sung by me, he will very easily be able to invoke His mercy. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the dearest objective of all auspicious benedictions. A human being who sings this song sung by me will certainly please Him. Such a devotee, being fixed in the Lord's devotional service, can acquire whatever he wants.

A devotee who rises early in the morning and with folded hands chants these prayers sung by Lord Shiva, or one who facilitates others hearing them, certainly becomes free from all bondage to fruitive activities. My dear sons of the King, the prayers I have recited to you are meant for pleasing the the Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I advise you to recite these prayers, which are as effective as great austerities. In this way, when you are mature, your life will be successful, and you will certainly achieve all your desired objectives without fail.

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » SB 4.24: Chanting the Song Sung by Lord Shiva » Verse: 16-72.*

SIMPLY BY OFFERING PRAYERS ONE CAN BECOME PERFECT

His Divine Grace

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

The prayers offered by Lord Shiva are very authoritative and significant. Simply by offering prayers to the Supreme Lord one can become perfect, even though engaged in his occupational duty. The real purpose of life is to become a devotee of the Lord. It does not matter where one is situated. Whether one is a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, *śūdra*, American, Englishman, Indian, etc., one can execute devotional service anywhere and everywhere in the material existence simply by offering prayers unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* is also a prayer, for a prayer addresses the Supreme Personality of Godhead by His name and invokes good fortune by petitioning the Lord to allow one to engage in His devotional service. The Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* also says, "My dear Lord Krishna, my dear Lord Rama, O energy of the Lord, Hare, kindly engage me in Your service." Although one may be situated in a lowly position, he can execute devotional service under any circumstance, as stated, *ahaituky apratihātā*: "Devotional service cannot be checked by any material condition." (SB 1.2.6) Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu also recommended this process:

*jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva
jīvanti san-mukhariṭām bhavadīya-vārtām
sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vān-manobhir
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām*

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

One may remain situated in his own place or his own occupational duty and still lend his ear to receive the message of the Lord from realized souls. The Krishna conscious movement is based on this principle, and we are opening centers all over the world to give everyone a chance to hear the message of Lord Krishna in order to go back home, back to Godhead. (SB 10.14.3)

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » SB 4.24: Chanting the Song Sung by Lord Shiva » Verse: 69, Purport.*

Prayers

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura

How do we find a genuine spiritual master?

The first step in attaining perfection is to take shelter of a bona fide spiritual master. By the Lord's will, everyone receives a spiritual master according to his qualification, just as the Christians received Jesus Christ and the Muslims Prophet Mohammad. Moreover, according to their misfortune, materialists remain attached to material life by accepting family priests as their spiritual masters. But if we are fortunate and search sincerely for a bona fide spiritual master, and if we humbly pray to the Lord to attain the mercy of such a *guru*, then by the Lord's mercy we will certainly receive a bona fide *guru* in this lifetime. Then by taking shelter at his lotus feet our life will become successful. The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* states:

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva,
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*

Out of many millions of wandering living entities, one who is very fortunate, by the grace of Krishna, gets an opportunity to associate with a bona fide spiritual master. By the mercy of both Krishna and the spiritual master, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service. (Madhya 19.151)

*kṛṣṇa yadi kṛpā kare kona bhāgyavāne,
guru-antaryāmi-rūpe śikhāya āpane*

Krishna is situated in everyone's heart as the caitya-guru, the spiritual master within. When He is kind to some fortunate conditioned soul, He personally gives him lessons so he can progress in devotional service, instructing the person internally as the Supersoul and externally as the spiritual master. (Madhya 22.47)

*guru kṛṣṇa-rūpa hana śāstrera pramāṇe,
guru-rūpe kṛṣṇa kṛpā karena bhakta-gaṇe*

According to the deliberate opinion of all revealed scriptures, the spiritual master is non-different from



Krishna. Lord Krishna in the form of the spiritual master delivers His devotees. (Ādi 1.45)

*yadyapi āmāra guru—caitanya dāsa,
tathāpi jāniye āmi tānhāra prakāśa*

Although I know that my spiritual master is a servitor of Sri Caitanya, I also understand him to be a plenary manifestation of the Lord. (Ādi 1.44)

*śikṣā-guruke ta'jāni kṣṇera svarūpa,
antaryāmi, bhakta-śreṣṭha,—ei dui rūpa*

One should know the instructing spiritual master to be the Supreme Personality Krishna. Lord Krishna manifests Himself as the Supersoul and as the greatest devotee of the Lord. (Ādi 1.47)

*jīve sākṣāt nāhi tāte guru caitya-rūpe,
śikṣā-guru haya kṣṇa-mahānta-svarūpe*

Since one cannot visually experience the presence of the Supersoul, He appears before us as a liberated devotee. Such a spiritual master is none other than Krishna Himself. (Ādi 1.58)

“O Krishnacandra, please accept me as your servant. I will not continue to serve this temporary material world while thinking of myself as an enjoyer.” When a living entity sincerely and humbly prays in this way, then the most merciful Lord appears before him in the form of a liberated devotee. Unless we are fortunate enough to receive transcendental knowledge from a bona fide spiritual master, we cannot become qualified to engage in the Lord's service. Since no human being or demigod is capable of awarding such transcendental knowledge, we must find shelter under a bona fide spiritual master.

Can we attain auspiciousness if we reject our benevolent well-wisher, the bona fide spiritual master?

The spiritual master comes from Vaikuntha. The Lord has sent him. How can we go back to Godhead if we renounce his shelter and association? The spiritual master's mercy is the root of all auspiciousness. What have we actually done to receive his mercy? We should renounce our false ego and offer our respectful obeisance at his feet. To give up the false ego that “I am the seer” or “I am the enjoyer,” is called offering obeisance. That is why the word “*namah*,” obeisance, is added to *mantras*.

The spiritual master's mercy destroys the sinful mentality that “I am the doer.” His mercy awakens the pride that “I am the Lord's servant.” Material pride, false ego, and all sinful mentalities are removed simply by his influence. “I was not accustomed to worshiping my

spiritual master every day, but by his mercy I came to know that my only duty was to serve his lotus feet.” It is everyone's duty to worship the self-realized spiritual master and follow in his footsteps. We should not follow the blind. The spiritual master is our only well-wisher; our only relative, and our only protector. Only by his mercy are we fortunate enough to know this.

After attaining the lotus feet of my spiritual master, I no longer maintained the mentality that aside of his service I have important things to do. My spiritual master, who is the Lord's dear-most servant, mercifully imparted to me knowledge of Nandanandana's service to protect me from false ego. Thus, I realized that the living entities have no duty other than to gratify Krishna's senses. Nandanandana is the only worshipable Lord, the life, soul and ornament of all living entities. The spiritual master is extremely dear to that Nandanandana.

An unqualified person such as myself cannot serve such a spiritual master with body, mind, and speech. Yet my spiritual master, who is an ocean of mercy and affection, empowered me out of his causeless mercy and treated me with an abundance of love. He is so merciful! If I can attain his mercy, if I can realize that beside him I have no other well-wisher in this world. Then, simply by his causeless mercy, I will be able to attain the qualification to serve him who is pleased by sincere service. On the day he bestows his causeless mercy on me and becomes pleased with me I will properly understand *hari-kathā*. Then nothing other than the service of *guru* and Krishna will remain important to me.

We should always pray to the spiritual master to become qualified to accept his causeless mercy and empowerment. The spiritual master's mercy is incomparable. Due to misfortune I cannot realise the greatness of my spiritual master. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, is controlled by devotion, still, I am unable to show gratitude for the causeless mercy He has bestowed by appearing before me as *guru*.

What mentality should a sincere disciple have?

Sincere disciples should be completely devoted to their *guru*. They should know their spiritual master to be as good as God, the only object of their love and devotion. “The spiritual master is my eternal master and I am his eternal servant”: this is how a disciple thinks. Service to the spiritual master is a disciple's life, ornament, and means of survival. Disciples do not know anything except their spiritual master. They always think of their spiritual master while eating, sleeping, dreaming, and serving. They are fully convinced that the spiritual master is the completely independent Personality of Godhead.

A sincere disciple has the following mentality: “Even if my spiritual master does not accept service from such an unqualified person as myself, I will always be prepared to render unalloyed service at his feet with body, mind, and words. If he kicks me, I will think it is because of

my incompetence; his kick will come because of my faults. He is always right. May temporary sense desires not distract me from his service even for a moment. My only prayer is that my spiritual master mercifully accepts my service. I pray to never fall into bad association or to fall away from his lotus feet. My only solace is that my spiritual master is more merciful to unqualified persons. With a desire to achieve his causeless mercy, I will become greedier for his service.”

Whose offering does Lord Krishna accept?

“O Krishna! I do not want from You any happiness for myself. Whatever You want from me, I will obey without fail. Even if I have to suffer in executing Your will, that suffering will be my pleasure. You are the all-auspicious Lord, and as such, Your arrangements can never be inauspicious.” If a servant of Krishna feelingly prays to Him with such faith, the Lord will certainly accept his offering. Without these feelings and faith, the Lord will not accept that which is offered.

How should a devotee pray?

A devotee prays, “O Radha-Ramana, enjoyer of Radha, please protect me. May I not bring about my own ruination by ever leaving Your service.” Those who have entered family life should pray, “O Lord! May I not become overly attached to family life. May my desire for material life be exhausted. May my attention remain always fixed on Your service. Please protect me.”

How should we call the Supreme Lord?

Sri Gaurasundara taught us that in order to chant the Lord’s holy names, we must become lower than the straw in the street. Unless we consider ourselves insignificant, we cannot call upon another for help. Only when we pray for another’s help do we consider ourselves helpless. In such a state of mind we think that without another’s help we will be unable to do anything. We will understand that it is impossible to do alone that which is meant to be done by five people.

Sri Gaurasundara has instructed us to chant the Lord’s names. We get this information from our spiritual master. To chant the Lord’s names means to take His help. But while chanting, if we consider Him our servant or expect Him to do our work, then there is no question of our living in the conception, “I am lower than the straw in the street.”

An external display of humility is not necessarily genuine humility. More likely it is cheating. Our call will not reach the Lord if we call Him as a master calls his servants. He is supremely independent and not under anyone’s control. Unless we transform our false ego and become sincerely humble, our prayers will not reach the supreme, independent Lord.

One more point: We have to remember that while humbly chanting the Lord’s name, if we do not become

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

tolerant, our chanting will remain imperfect. If we display our intolerance by being greedy for particular objects, then we are opposing the principle of humility. If we have complete faith that the Supreme Lord is the Absolute Truth and that by simply chanting His names we will not experience any deficiency, we will have no lack of tolerance. As soon as we become greedy and try to exhibit our impatience or our own skill, we cannot call the Supreme Lord properly.

We often think we are doing the Lord a favor by offering Him prayers; that we could have engaged in some other activity instead. Such a mentality is an example of a lack of tolerance. We need someone to protect us from such a mentality, someone to help us become lower than the straw in the street. We certainly need to take shelter of a person who will deliver us from sinful motives. Srila Narottama Thakura says, “Lord Krishna does not reject those who worship Him under the shelter of the spiritual master. Others who do not do this simply live and die uselessly.”

What should be the object of our praying?

The object of our constant prayer should be to beg the Lord for His causeless mercy. The final goal of every living entity is to attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

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